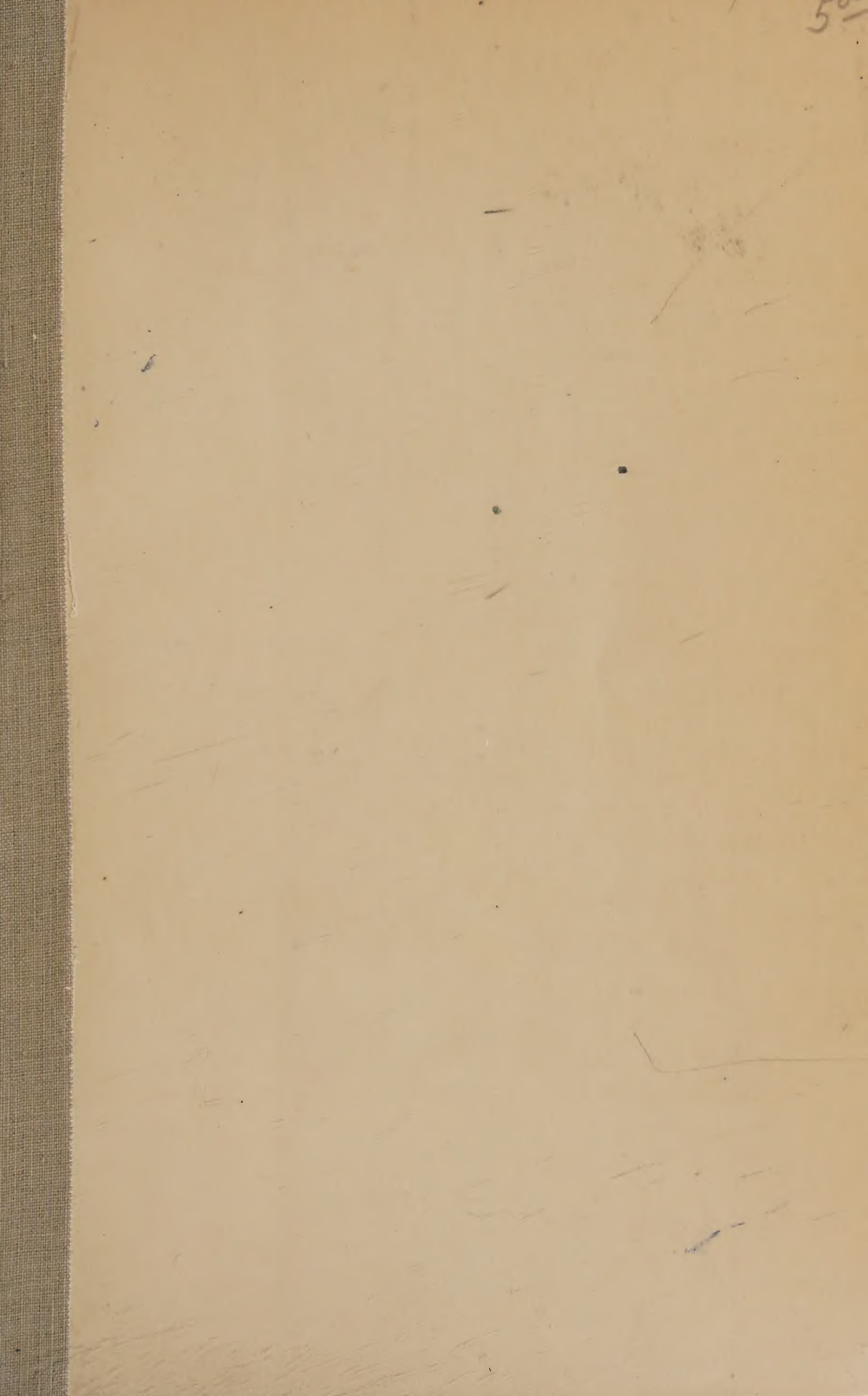


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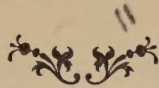
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Italy

ITALY

By LUIGI VILLARI



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PREFACE

It is beyond the wit of man so to describe the Italian politics of the day as to win the sympathies of all the world. Professor Luigi Villari does not profess to rise above the combat. He is a frank defender of the Fascist régime. He does not ask us to believe that what has been good for Italy will also be good for England, but he does most sincerely hold that Fascism has rescued his own country from great evils and that it has improved the tone and quality of its national life.

The judgment of so learned and accomplished a student is entitled to respect. Whatever may be our views, whether we hold that Fascism is the evil thing, or that it is a jewel but purchased at too high a price, or that it is a brilliant discovery in the political hygiene of modern society deserving of universal imitation, we shall all gain by understanding what Italian Fascism is and how it is appreciated by intelligent supporters in the country of origin. Italy, whether we like it or no, is for the present governed on the Fascist system, and appears to accept her fate. If, then, we are to comprehend contemporary Italy, we must know what Fascism is, what Fascism does, what Fascism dreams. It is the merit of Professor Villari's most able volume that it enables English readers to see the Italy of to-day, an Italy freshly transformed by a series of changes as remarkable as any which in the space of a few years have refashioned the structure of a State and the mind of a people.

H. A. L. FISHER.

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INTRODUCTION

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

THE geographical position and climate of Italy have affected her history and political and economic development throughout the ages. A country limited by a great chain of mountains, constituting, in days when no railways and few roads existed, an impassable barrier, was, to a large extent, cut off from its neighbours to the north, west, and east, and less influenced by the movements operating beyond the Alps. But its long coastline and its position as a peninsula jutting out into the Mediterranean brought it into close touch with the peoples bordering on that sea, and, in later times, made of it a jumping-off place for maritime adventures in all the then known oceans. Moreover, if the Alps to some extent separated Italy from Northern Europe, her good climate and agreeable conditions of life attracted the peoples from beyond the mountains living in less favoured lands. Hence the oft-repeated invasions of the Barbarians, and, later, of the French Kings, the German Emperors, and the Austrians, while the internal conditions of Italy—the “Garden of the Empire”—made resistance difficult.

The mountain ranges with which a large part of the country is covered, the Apennines forming a sort of spinal cord all down the length of the peninsula and spreading outwards into many subsidiary chains, have divided Italy into numerous separate communities, each to some extent cut off from the others by natural obstacles, and consequently living its own life and tending to develop on its own lines.

The main divisions of Italy are the following: In the north we have the great alluvial plain formed by the Po, the Adige, and other rivers and their tributaries, bounded on the north, west, and north-east by the Alps, on the south by the Apennines, and on the east by the Adriatic; it is

the most fertile area in Italy and one of the most fertile in the world. Next comes the Central Apennine region, largely mountainous and sterile, but comprising within the folds of the various ranges some broad tracts of rich land and fertile valleys, such as the plain of Florence, the Val di Chiana, the Tuscan Maremma, the Roman Campagna, and parts of the Marche and Umbria. Farther south is the Apulian plain, of considerable fertility, but subject to long droughts, and some other areas of smiling country well cultivated, but a large part of the south is rocky and sterile. The same is true of the islands; Sicily and Sardinia have many lovely spots where every crop flourishes, but other areas are stony, drought-ridden wastes.

The differences of climate are also very considerable. In the north the winters are hard and attended by low temperature, fogs, and snow, while the summers are intensely hot, but often stormy. In the south the winters are short but very wet, and the summers long, dry, and hot, but not as hot as those of the north. But even in the south there are mountainous districts, especially in the Abruzzi and Calabria, where the winters are intensely cold and the snows lie so deep as to permit of ski-ing and bob-sleighing. There are numerous spots all over Italy where the winters are pleasantly mild and sunny—such as the Riviera, the Latian coast at Anzio and Terracina, the Bays of Naples and of Salerno, the Conca d'Oro of Palermo, the East Coast of Sicily, and the shores of the Lake of Garda. In the Alps and Apennines there are many places where the summers are cool and offer agreeable relief from the heat of the plains.

Few of Italy's rivers are navigable, and most are of a torrential nature, liable to long periods of low water and shorter ones of impetuous and sometimes devastating floods. With the exception of those flowing into the Venetian lagoon, none of them form estuaries suitable for ports. Such ports as there are are formed by the contours of the coast or the work of man.

In ancient times a large part of Italy, as the classical writers tell us, was covered with forests. But improvident farmers, the timber hunger, and the necessity of eliminating possible hiding-places for brigands, contributed to destroy or greatly reduce the wooded area. By the middle of the

nineteenth century most of the mountains of Italy were bare of trees, and of the great forest belt once extending along the Mediterranean coast from the Gulf of Genoa to the Bay of Naples only a few fragments remain, such as the exquisite pineta of Viareggio and Marina di Pisa, the wild Macchia of the Maremma, and the marvellous primeval Selva di Terracina. This destruction of the forests has caused the water supply to be ill-regulated and inadequate. The solution of the problem of reafforestation, although one of the most urgent, is only now being seriously attempted on a systematic scale.

Malaria has always been a scourge of Italian life. The frequent floods form marsh lands, which in the hot summers form excellent breeding-grounds for the anopheles mosquito, so that many tracts of good agricultural land are uninhabitable, or prove so unfavourable to the health of the inhabitants that efficient labour is impossible. The disease existed in Roman times, increased after the Barbarian invasions when the aqueducts were destroyed, persisted throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance with varying degrees of intensity (it seems to some extent to run in cycles), until in the nineteenth century it was first grappled with effectively, once its cause was discovered. The malarial districts at the mouths of the Po and in the Venetian lagoons have been now rendered almost entirely healthy, the Maremma is being reclaimed, and progress is advancing in the Lazio, the south, and the islands.¹

The variety of the geography, geology, and climate is reflected in the landscape, of which the chief characteristic is, indeed, its infinite variety. In the High Alps we find some of the grandest and wildest scenery in Europe, varying from the great massifs and vast snow-fields of Piedmont to the needle-like rocks of the Dolomites. South of the highest ranges are the smiling hills, chestnut-clad valleys, and blue lakes of the Prealpi. The North Italian Plain is less picturesque, but interesting as a land of rich farms and well-tilled fields, with innumerable historic and busy

¹ During and after the war, when the anti-malarial measures were relaxed and reclamation work was suspended, there was a recrudescence of malaria even in Venetia.

towns and industrial centres scattered all over it. In Central Italy one is attracted by the lovely valleys and the grim hill towns, hanging

" Like an eagle's nest
Upon the crest
Of purple Apennine."

The wide green expanses of grass-land in the Roman Campagna, with long-horned cattle and shaggy half-wild horses roaming at large, patches of water glistening like silver in the sun, the solemn ruins of Roman aqueducts, temples, and villas, the forbidding medieval towers and the distant framework of blue mountains, form a picture unsurpassed for beauty anywhere else in the world. The Abruzzo *forte e gentile* provides many delightful surprises for the traveller, and the rest of the less-known South is also rich in fine landscapes and picturesque towns. All down both coasts of Italy are innumerable vistas of sea and shore, rich vegetation, and infinitely varied colour.

The soil of Italy, like the climate and the landscape, is extremely varied. Apart from the rocky and sterile parts, the fertile areas produce many different crops. Wheat, Indian corn, and other cereals are grown almost all over the country, although the returns vary considerably. The North Italian plain, Central Tuscany, the Rieti Valley in Umbria, parts of the Lazio, the Puglie, the Pianà di Catania are the most productive wheat areas. But the peasants sow cereals for their own use even in the most unpromising conditions—I have seen it growing in the Abruzzi at 1,200 metres above sea level. In Lower Lombardy and parts of Piedmont rice gives excellent returns. The vine grows, like wheat, almost all over Italy, and every district produces its own local wine. The best wine comes from Piedmont, Tuscany, the Alban Hills near Rome, and some other parts of the Lazio (such as the famous Est-Est-Est of Montefiascone), the island of Capri, the Puglie, and parts of Sicily. Italian wines vary enormously in quality and taste, as each landlord or peasant produces and manufactures his own in his own way, so that uniformity of type is very rare; many Italian wines, while excellent when drunk on the spot, do not travel well. The great bulk of the Italian wines are consumed locally, only a comparatively

small amount being exported.¹ Hemp is grown successfully in the Ferrara and Rovigo provinces and in some others; sugar beet, recently introduced, has proved successful in various districts and has given rise to the sugar industry. The olive flourishes on the Riviera, and almost all over Central and Southern Italy, but the best oil comes from the Riviera, Lucca, the Sabine country, and the Puglie. The orange and the lemon are a staple product of Sicily, parts of the Campania, the shores of Lake Garda, and some other spots. Fruit-trees of many varieties are common everywhere, although they are not always as well cared for as they might be. Vegetables of all kinds are grown in large quantities. The mulberry-tree, which nourishes the silkworm, is chiefly cultivated in North Italy and Tuscany. Most Italian agricultural areas produce many different crops, and even on quite small allotments we find wheat, the vine, the mulberry-tree, vegetables, and poplars growing side by side. Tobacco is also largely produced.

With the exception of the absolutely sterile mountainous tracts and certain marshy and malarious plains, there is very little soil wasted, although some parts are undoubtedly capable of improvement in agricultural methods, especially in the south and the islands. The vast mass of uncultivated lands frequently talked about by politicians of the old school only existed in their own imagination.

In addition to farming, the soil of Italy supports a considerable quantity of live stock. Cattle are raised in all parts of the country, and some breeds in Lombardy, Tuscany, and the Lazio attain a high standard of excellence, while Swiss and Dutch cattle is imported and has become acclimatized. Oxen are used for the plough instead of horses, and the dairy farms of Lombardy, the Veneto, and other provinces are deservedly famous. Horses are bred in smaller numbers, but there are some good breeds in the Friuli, the province of Cremona, the Tuscan Maremma, the Lazio, the province of Salerno, the Puglie, Sicily, and Sardinia. Sheep and goats abound in Central Italy and the South, and although the former are sometimes regarded as the enemies of agriculture, because the larger land-owners occasionally find it more profitable to let sheep

¹ Much of the Apulian wine crop, however, goes to France to be mixed with French wines.

graze on their estates than to cultivate them intensively, these animals have their uses, not only as producers of wool, but also of cheese.

The population of Italy, although showing considerable varieties of type, is more homogeneous than the superficial observer might imagine. It is, of course, made up of elements of divers origins, but what great nation is not? Yet there are many common features making for a certain uniformity of type. I need not go into the history of Italian ethnography, nor into the remote origins of the people. All that it is necessary to say is that while the basis of its composition was Latin, on a substratum of Etruscans, Celts, and other pre-existing races, more recent elements have penetrated it to a greater or lesser degree. In the South and in Sicily Greek colonies were established before the days of the Roman Empire. Later came the Barbarians, Teutons, and Huns, who left less profound ethnic traces than is generally supposed, for their numbers were never very great. Teutonic elements became the dominant class in Northern and Central Italy, and gave rise to a feudal nobility ruling over the Latin masses. But by the later Middle Ages, with the rise of the city States and the rich and active mercantile communities, these Teutonic overlords were completely assimilated and Latinized. Few traces of Teutonic influence remained except in some place and proper names, and in certain customs and institutions. At the time of Dante, although the struggle between the feudal nobility and the city burghers still raged, it had no longer any racial basis. Eventually the citizens forced the nobles to come and live in the towns, where they continued their internecine strife, until all fell under the despots of a later age.

In the South and the islands the Arab invasions left a deeper impress on the race and on its manners and customs, but produced no lasting racial differences between the various parts of the population. The local nobility, which soon arose and became very powerful, was partly of Swabian origin, created by the Hohenstauffens, but it was crushed or driven out by the French feudatories imported by Charles of Anjou, and later still a Spanish aristocracy arrived with the Arragonese kings. But like the nobles of the North, all these elements were eventually absorbed and

Italianized until they ceased to differ racially from the rest of the inhabitants. The Spanish customs which have survived in the South are common to all classes.

The invasions of the latest age—French, German, and Austrian—although politically important, left no impress on the people.

Thus, while the population is made up of different elements, there is nowhere any difference between one part of it and another due to racial distinctions, such as exists between the Irish and the British, or the Germans and Slavs in East-Central Europe.

The language has been an important factor making for unity, for if there were, and still are, many dialects, the language of education and culture has always been one since the times of Dante. The basis is Latin, and the many invasions left no traces in the popular tongue save a few words and expressions, some of them accepted as good Italian throughout the country, while others are only used in certain districts. No foreign language survived except in a small number of places. As long as the Kingdom of Sardinia (formerly the County and then the Duchy of Savoy) comprised the French-speaking Trans-Alpine provinces, not only was French spoken in those provinces, but it was the second language of the upper classes in Piedmont too, and was used at Court, in Parliament, and in official documents. But with the cession of Savoy and Nice in 1860 to France, French ceased to be in general use, except in certain parts of the Val d'Aosta, where it is still commonly spoken. In other parts of the Val d'Aosta, there are German-speaking communities, but the use of the latter tongue is declining, while in the Sette Comuni (Province of Vicenza), where it was once common, it has disappeared.

In the Friuli a Ladine tongue, which is something more than a mere dialect, is spoken, and in the Cividale district of that same province there are Slav-speaking villages, of which there are three others isolated in the Molise. Albanian communities are numerous in Calabria, the Puglie, and Sicily; the statesman Francesco Crispi was an Albanian from Piana dei Greci (so called on account of the Greek ritual of its Albanian inhabitants), and there are a few Greek-speaking villages in the same parts of Italy, while the people of Alghero on the North-West Coast of

Sardinia speak Catalan. Until after the war these were the only communities speaking other languages than Italian. But now Italy has acquired the Alto Adige, where some 180,000 to 200,000 persons, mostly immigrants from beyond the Alps, settled there under Habsburg auspices in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, speak German (in some valleys a Ladine dialect is the common tongue), and some districts on the North-East frontiers (parts of the provinces of Gorizia, Trieste, and Istria) where there are about 400,000 Slovenes. But even these communities, whether they are destined in the end to retain their original languages or not, will undoubtedly sooner or later learn to speak Italian as well, as all their interests and business relations are with the Italian State. Italian is the language of the schools and public offices, and many Italians from other parts of Italy settle there. The communities in the old provinces who speak other languages than Italian have long been bilingual, and in many of them the non-Italian language is dying out.

Apart from the communities described above, there are innumerable dialects of Italian. Every region of Italy has its own, and even when speaking Italian the inhabitants of the various parts of the country can almost always be distinguished by their accents. Piedmont, Lombardy, Venetia, Tuscany, the Lazio, the Abruzzi, Naples, Sicily, etc., all have their very distinct vernaculars, and even within the same region or province there are many local varieties. Tuscany is the area where the purest Italian is spoken by the masses, but even there many dialects exist; Florence, Siena, Arezzo, Lucca, Pisa, all have their own. Sometimes there are even differences discernible to the trained ear between the inhabitants of different quarters of the same city; in Rome the Trasteverini do not speak quite in the same way as denizens of the left bank of the Tiber. Some of these dialects—notably those of Genoa, the Romagna, Sicily, and Sardinia—are incomprehensible to the outsider, and contain many words wholly different from those in general use and of obscure foreign origin, although in some cases, as in certain Sardinian dialects, alien-sounding words are of pure Latin descent.

But the language of education is common to the whole country. Books and newspapers are all written in literary

Italian, although there is also a dialect literature and a dialect stage. In certain parts of Italy, such as Lombardy, Piedmont, and Venetia, even the educated classes habitually use dialect when talking among themselves, but few would think of writing in anything but pure Italian. In the schools only Italian is taught, so that even the people of the remotest districts learn a certain amount of literary Italian. Military service and employment in any of the departments of the civil service tend to generalize its use.

Another unifying force is the Church. As we shall see in a subsequent chapter, practically the whole of the Italian people are Roman Catholics, even though many are not strict in their observance. The dominant religion is taken for granted, and theological discussions, such as form the delight of the Scots working man, are unknown. On the other hand, there is nothing in the shape of religious intolerance, and the fact of not belonging to the Catholic Church has never, in modern times, been a cause of disability or discrimination against a man in any walk of life. Italy has had one Jewish Premier (Luzzatti), several Jewish Cabinet Ministers and Ambassadors (including one Minister of War, General Ottolenghi), and one of her most distinguished and admirable statesmen, several times Minister and twice Premier, was of Jewish origin and of the Protestant faith (Sonnino). There is practically no anti-Semitism, and except in a very few old-fashioned circles in certain provincial towns, Jews are admitted to the best society on a footing of perfect equality, and are found in every profession and every branch of the public service. With the exception of the Roman question, which is not really a religious conflict at all, there has never been any division of opinion based on religious differences since the days of the medieval heresies and of the abortive attempts at Reformation in the sixteenth century.

Before the unification of Italy the inhabitants of the various States, although politically separated, did not regard each other as foreigners. The subjects of the King of Sardinia were deeply devoted to their dynasty, before the Napoleonic wars there was a certain loyalty to the Bourbons in the Neapolitan provinces, and a part of the Roman aristocracy was attached to the Pope. But these feelings, more dynastic than national, hardly survived at all after the

Risorgimento, and did not constitute any divergence of political views between the inhabitants of the various former States.

With the establishment of Italian unity there arose a new division—that between the North and the South. It was a division born of the difference of habits, traditions, and civilization, and separated the Lombards, Piedmontese, Venetians, Romagnoli, Tuscans, Umbrians, and Marchigiani on the one hand, from the Neapolitans and Sicilians on the other, with the Romans somewhere between the two. I shall deal with the South Italian problem in another chapter, but shall say here that this divergence was in no way hatred, but rather a sense of superiority felt by the Northerner for his less advanced Southern brother, a superiority which was real in certain aspects, but by no means in all, and almost always exaggerated, as the Southerner has certain virtues developed to a very high degree; he on his part tended to regard the Northerner as to some extent the exploiter of the South, this also a view partly, but not wholly, founded on fact. In any case, this divergence has never amounted to active dislike, nor has it proved an obstacle to collaboration in the various walks of life, and it is rapidly declining, especially since the World War.

There have always been rivalries between the inhabitants of certain neighbouring towns which have an historic origin. The people of Roccacannuccia will tell you that those of Castelnuovo di Sotto (ten kilometres distant) are a very inferior lot and not to be trusted, and many towns are never mentioned by the inhabitants of other neighbouring towns without some uncomplimentary epithet. Gabriele D'Annunzio, in his *San Pantaleone*, gives a vivid description of the rivalry between two South Italian villages degenerating into fierce conflict. But such episodes belong to the past, at all events as far as serious consequences are concerned, and day by day the population becomes more homogeneous. Curiously enough, it is among the Italian emigrants in the United States that these local rivalries persist most strongly and last longest. Wherever the Italians are numerous they form themselves into numerous separate local groups according to the town or district of Italy of which they are natives, with their own mutual aid

and recreation societies, churches, festivals, organizations, etc.

It has often been said that a system of regional autonomy, perhaps on a federal basis, would have been preferable and more suited to Italian conditions than the one actually adopted of a centralized State. But the makers of Italian unity realized the great importance of welding the nation together and making of it one united people. The drawbacks of absolutely uniform institutions and laws for people whose psychology and character are not equally uniform were more than set off by the advantages of bringing the less advanced areas of the country up to the level of the more progressive ones.

There are, of course, class distinctions in Italy, as in all other countries. But, save for certain exceptions, they are never very deep or serious. The aristocracy lost all its legal privileges at the time of the French revolutionary wars (in many provinces they had already disappeared even earlier), and its social prestige had declined ever since. In united Italy noble birth has never constituted a privilege in any walk of life, except perhaps in that of securing American heiresses as brides for the sons of impoverished aristocrats. Little importance is consequently attached to titles, and there is among Italians hardly any real snobbery such as is described in the works of Dickens and Thackeray. A certain prejudice against the *nouveaux riches* exists, and was intensified after the war when that class became still more *nouveau* and still more *riche*, and acquired the uncomplimentary epithet of *pescicani* (sharks). In the South there has long been a sharp distinction between the *galantuomini*, or educated classes, comprising the nobility and the bourgeoisie, and the peasantry and town proletariat, a phenomenon which I shall deal with subsequently. In the industrial centres, and in some agricultural ones, Socialist propaganda, combined with bad economic conditions, brought about a feeling of class hatred which, although of foreign origin and alien to the Italian spirit, was for many years none the less intense. But in time the common sense and good nature of the people, improved economic conditions, and the fact that property was becoming ever more widely distributed, so that between the large capitalist or landlord and the workman or peasant there was a numerous

and constantly growing intermediate class, attenuated class conflict, until under the present *régime* a systematic and already largely successful attempt is being made through the new syndical organization to eliminate it altogether. In daily life, relations between persons of different classes are often close and cordial, especially between masters and servants or between landlords and peasants, save when the former are absentees (which is now not often the case).

The Italian worker, far from being lazy and inefficient, as some foreigners believe him to be, is one of the hardest workers in the world, even if his work is sometimes less productive than in more favourable circumstances it might be. He is less adaptable to standardization and mass production than men of some other countries, but this is probably due to the special conditions of Italian industry and agriculture, which are unsuited to such systems, and also to the Italian's lively intelligence and strong individuality. If these qualities are drawbacks in certain respects, they are advantageous in others, and perhaps the most promising forms of activity for Italy are those in which individuality and ingenuity are more important elements than uniformity of work or the abundance of raw materials.

The Italian farmer is a most industrious being, and he is ever ready to work hard early and late to cultivate his little piece of land and make the most sterile soil productive. I remember during the war how struck many British officers were who visited the Italian sector in Macedonia when they saw that the harsh, uncompromising rocks on the terrible Hill 1050 were made to bear excellent crops of vegetables through the patient industry of the Italian soldiers in the intervals between an engagement and an attack of malaria. While the heaviest fighting was raging along the Piave between November, 1917, and October, 1918, the peasants, mostly women and old men and boys, were ploughing, sowing, and reaping steadily almost up to the firing line.

If the highest possible results are not always obtained, the unfavourable atmospheric conditions are chiefly to blame—a long and deadly drought, a late frost, a disastrous flood, may destroy the fruits of months of ceaseless toil—

and also ignorance of scientific methods. This latter handicap is being gradually eliminated through agricultural education, while no measure is neglected to attenuate natural disadvantages by means of irrigation, drainage, and other forms of land reclamation.

For many centuries lack of discipline has been regarded as one of the chief defects of the Italian character, and there is, indeed, much truth in the contention. But it is not the whole truth. Historical vicissitudes and natural conditions were obstacles to discipline, and the badness of many of the past Governments, and the fact that they were often foreign or under foreign influences, made Italians naturally insubordinate and lacking in respect for all authority. Yet when conditions were favourable, Italians proved to be as capable of discipline as other peoples. The two most striking instances of this capacity for discipline are the Roman Catholic Church, an institution essentially Italian and yet one in which discipline and respect for authority and the elimination of individualism are characteristic features, and the World War, wherein the Italian people submitted to an iron discipline more terrible than anything they had ever experienced, and yet stood the test and achieved victory. The discipline of Fascism, to which the people have voluntarily subjected themselves in order to overcome certain evils from which the country was suffering, may be regarded as yet another proof of the same capacity. But if the Italians are capable of discipline, they must first be persuaded that it is necessary. They will not accept it blindly, on the basis of a mere *ipse dixit*; they want to know who the *ipse* is, why he *dixit*, and where they are being led. Once they are satisfied that the main principles which they are expected to follow are right, that the objects aimed at are really desirable, and that their leaders have no axe to grind, they are ready to obey unswervingly. Also, they expect to be treated as reasonable human beings and not as automata.

To understand the evolution of Italy and its present conditions, some knowledge of her past history is necessary. I shall not attempt to tell the whole of the story, but shall limit myself to giving an account of the main features and events of Italian history and of the development of ideas and tendencies in the last hundred years which have

affected and left their mark on the Italy of to-day more directly. Englishmen have long been more interested in Italy, and have shown more sympathy for and understanding of the Italian people, than most other foreigners. If I succeed in increasing that interest and that sympathy, and in inducing a certain number of my readers to devote still more attention to things Italian, to see them from an Italian, and not merely from a British, point of view, and not apply the Anglo-Saxon mentality to Italian conditions, I shall be satisfied and feel that this book has been of some use.

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I

THE DAWN OF THE NATIONAL IDEA

THE idea of Italian independence and unity had existed before the Risorgimento epoch, even before the French Revolution. Dante and Machiavelli had alluded to it and invoked a man who should liberate Italy from foreign rule, more than one Pope had attempted the task, many writers had mentioned it academically. But it never became a matter of practical politics, and was never felt by any wide stratum of public opinion. Instances of resistance to foreign rule had frequently occurred—the Sicilian Vespers, the Lombard League, the policy of Venice, the defence of Florence against the Imperial armies, the struggles of Piedmont for freedom from French predominance, Masaniello's revolt against the Spaniards in Naples. They were isolated episodes, and signified resistance by the people of some province or city against rulers who happened to be foreigners, but they could be paralleled by similar instances of resistance to outsiders who were Italians—Pisa's resistance to Florence, the struggles between Florence and Siena, the wars between Venice and Genoa.

From a political point of view the origins of modern Italy need not, therefore, be sought farther back than the French Revolution. But as regards literature and religion, which exercised so deep an influence on the course of political events, the ideas leading to the Risorgimento were born in remoter periods. The Italian language came to be a unifying force for the people of Italy since Dante's *Divine Comedy* had given it its definite form. Dialects, as we have seen, continued to exist, and still survive to-day with great vigour—in no other country are different dialects in such general use as in Italy—but the language of literature and culture remained always one, and has changed comparatively little throughout the ages. An Italian of average education is more capable of under-

standing the language of Boccaccio than a similarly educated Englishman can understand Chaucer. The writings of the classical Italian authors were read and understood all over Italy, and prepared the way for the essential idea of the unity of the race, in spite of the fact that the people were accustomed to foreign rule and to the division of the country into many separate states.

Vincenzo Monti, a poet whose political views during the agitated period from 1789 to 1815 altered with every change of *régime*, gave expression to the notion of the unifying force of the Italian language in an article in the *Poligrafo* (1812), criticizing the exaggerated purism of Father Cesari.

"The Italian language," he wrote, "is the only bond of union which neither the impulse of the centuries and of fortune, nor our very errors, have succeeded in disciplining, the only feature which preserves for us the aspect of a still living and single family, the only consoling friend who in the sweet fields of illusion silently and with religious piety assembles the members scattered by *Absyrtus*. I prefer to lean on any Italian who feels tenderness for his fatherland to develop my thought within himself; I do not mean that fatherland which some of us measure from the lantern of the cupolas (*i.e.*, who limit it to the territory of each single town), but that which reaches from the Alps to Lilybœum."

On the other hand, there had undoubtedly been from the late Renaissance onwards the beginning of a sense of local patriotism over certain large areas of Italy which had not existed in earlier ages, except in certain small city republics—and there it was limited to the inhabitants of the capital city and did not extend to the dependent territories. Thus in the Kingdom of Naples, once it ceased to be under the rule of Spain, there had grown up a sense of national unity and patriotism—limited, of course, to the territories of that Kingdom, whose frontiers had remained unchanged for centuries. The same feeling existed in the Kingdom of Sardinia, whose inhabitants, under the House of Savoy, had acquired a very real, if somewhat narrow, national pride in their country, its traditions, and, above all, its dynasty. There was no feeling of the kind in the Papal States, which consisted of four distinct territories—Lazio, Umbria, Marche, and the Romagna—greatly differing

from each other, and subdivided into many smaller communities, with separate historic traditions, and merely united by the accident of having come under the Temporal Power of the Popes. In Tuscany and in the minor States patriotic pride existed only in a very attenuated form if at all. In Venetia it existed more strongly, owing to the age-long history of the Republic, to which even the dependent provinces were strongly attached, as appeared in the moving ceremony of the burial of the Venetian banner in the Dalmatian towns, when, after Campoformio, Venice was handed over to Austria. But Venice at the end of the eighteenth century was in full decadence, and patriotic feeling had greatly waned.

One other feeling existed which tended to some extent to maintain a certain sense of national unity—religion. The Popes had on various occasions attempted to unite Italy under a loose predominance of the Church, as in the period of the struggles between Guelphs and Ghibellines and of the Lombard League, when the Papacy represented to some extent national unity as opposed to the predominance of the Empire, which was becoming ever more Germanic in character and therefore foreign. But at other times they invited foreign princes to send armies into Italy to protect them against the encroachments of other potentates, Italian or foreign, and not infrequently they were chiefly anxious to carve a powerful State out of the territories of their neighbours for the Church, or even, as at the time of the Borgias, out of the dominions of the Church itself, for their own relatives.

But with the growth of Protestantism, which flourished chiefly in Northern Europe, and the separatist Gallican tendencies in the French Church, Catholicism came to be in a certain sense the national religion of the Italians, and at a time when no other form of Italian nationalism was possible or even conceivable it was a force which made for national unity. Italy, indeed, was, with the exception of Spain, the only wholly Catholic country in the world; the attempts of the Reformation to make converts in Italy failed in the face of the indifference of the masses and the power of the Church. It was Benedetto Croce who first called attention to the national function fulfilled by the Roman Church in the seventeenth century, and this idea is

at the bottom of the Fascist attitude towards Catholicism, which it respects on account of its national character. There had been, it is true, a certain resistance on the part of various Italian princes to the encroachments of the Papacy on the civil power, notably in Piedmont, Naples, and Venice. But these were struggles against the Papacy for its action in interfering in politics and administration, and in no way affected the attitude of acquiescence on the part of Italians of all classes—princes, nobles, and people—in Catholicism.

Whilst the Papacy derived advantage from the widespread commercial and cultural activities of the Italian peoples in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the fact that Rome was the centre of Catholicism and of the vast mass of affairs developing round Rome was beneficial to the Italians. The Papacy was also of use to the nation by its opposition to the Empire, which was both Germanic and universal. Even the consolidation of the Papal State in the heart of Italy prevented the conjunction of the Spaniards in the South with those in Lombardy, and thus impeded the Hispanization of the whole peninsula.

Mazzini himself recognized religion as uniting "the whole of Italy under a common standard."¹

At the same time the Papacy was an obstacle—perhaps the chief obstacle because the most lasting—to the unity of Italy. As Machiavelli wrote, while it was itself too weak to conquer and unify Italy, it always opposed all those who might have conquered and unified her. Also, if it impeded the predominance of Spain over Italy, it also cut off the South from the rest of the peninsula, and tended to isolate it and keep it in a state of political inferiority, contributing to that separation, only now being overcome, between North and South.

Apart from the slender unifying forces of language and religion, there was at the time when the French Revolution broke out practically no trace of real national feeling. There was no hostility to the Austrians who held Lombardy, nor to the native despots who ruled over the rest of Italy. There might be discontent here and there at some particular measure, or dislike of some individual ruler or government, but the revolutionary idea, either in the

¹ *Scritti editi e inediti*, vol. iii., p. 261, ed. of 1907.

national or in the Liberal sense, did not exist. The political and national education of the people had yet to be made.

The administration of the country was by no means all bad. In the eighteenth century there had been a vigorous reform movement in various parts of Italy—in Piedmont, in Tuscany, in Naples. In Lombardy the Austrian bureaucracy was efficient and honest, and the inhabitants benefited by the reforms introduced by the Emperors, notably Leopold, throughout their dominions. In Tuscany the same Leopold had been Grand Duke before becoming Emperor, and had done much to improve agriculture and the general conditions of his State. In Piedmont many useful reforms had been introduced, agriculture had become more prosperous, old feudal abuses were being swept away, property was becoming more widely distributed. In Naples Charles III. and Ferdinand IV. had done much for the general welfare of the people, and, indeed, the Monarchy was regarded by the masses as their one protection against the abuses of the feudal aristocracy and the still more oppressive bourgeois landowning class. There was then also a keen intellectual class, from amid which a political philosophy was arising and a body of legal knowledge had been formed.

It was in this state of feeling that the French Revolution burst upon the peaceful Italian world and infused a host of new ideas and new thoughts into a highly intelligent and temperamental people which, until then, had never dreamed of them. There was at the time an essential difference between the French and Italian peoples. In France the bulk of the people were revolutionary, at all events, all the thinking part of the population which turned its attention to public matters. In Italy, when the ideas of the French Revolution began to penetrate, they were only adopted by an *élite*—a part of the aristocracy and of the middle classes and a small section of the clergy; the proletariat remained traditionalist, Catholic, and reactionary. There were various reasons for this popular hostility to French ideas, but the principal one was the manner in which the French and their supporters treated religion, not to mention the actions of the greedy generals and commissaries who fell upon the country for purposes of plunder, although this had been the custom of the foreign invaders of Italy throughout the ages. The French declared that they had come to Italy as

liberators, but, as Botta wrote, their liberty was "slavery in a Phrygian cap."

In a general way the division of classes in Italy was less sharp than in France; the rich were less rich, the aristocracy less powerful, the bourgeoisie less numerous, the proletariat more backward. All except a small minority were attached to religion.

The French Revolution secured in every Italian State the support of a small group of intellectuals, philosophers and students of political questions who had received inspiration from the French philosophers of the eighteenth century, and also from Italians such as G. B. Vico. Their ideas were humanitarian, doctrinaire, and vaguely cosmopolitan. But they were not shared by any large mass of public opinion, owing to the lack of political education in the majority, and only derived importance from the high character and intellectual eminence of their votaries.

The French Republican Government proceeded to spread revolutionary ideas in Italy as in other countries, and followed up this spiritual advance guard with the more material forces of the army. General Bonaparte conquered Piedmont and Lombardy with little difficulty. A part of the aristocracy and of the clergy and the bourgeoisie, and also a very small part of the proletariat of the towns, favoured French ideas; the rest of the aristocracy and the clergy, most of the town proletariat and all the peasantry, were reactionary, and in Lombardy favourable to Austria, whose rule had, until then, been mild and benevolent. But the pro-French minority was sufficiently numerous and influential to be of real help to Bonaparte. The lack of national feeling and the fact that both the possible alternative *régimes*—the Austrian and the French—were foreign eliminated all idea of national independence. Bonaparte's attitude in Lombardy was that of a liberator, and he talked with more or less sincerity about "liberty" and "Italy." But he aroused a certain amount of hostility on account of the heavy taxation he imposed, particularly on the nobility and the Church.

An Italian legion took part in the operations against the Austrians, and we soon find the nucleus of what was to be the future Italic Kingdom. At Modena a congress of delegates of various parts of Northern Italy was held—Modena

itself, Reggio, Ferrara, and Bologna (the latter was part of the States of the Church)—and on December 30th, 1796, the Cispadane Republic¹ was proclaimed, while Venice, with Lombardy, under the auspices of Bonaparte, was also liberated. Bonaparte had, in fact, on September 20th of that year issued a proclamation to the Italians, summoning them to his assistance for the campaign against Austria :

“ The time has come when Italy will appear with honour among the powerful nations. Lombardy, Bologna, Modena, Reggio, Ferrara, and perhaps Romagna, if they prove worthy, will one day astonish Europe and renew the great days of Italy. Spring to arms ; the part of Italy which is already free is densely populated and opulent ; act so as to make the enemies of your rights and your freedom tremble. I shall not lose sight of you : the Republicans will lead you on to the path of victory, and with them you will learn to defeat the tyrants. I shall lead your battalions, and your happiness will be in part the work of your own hands.”

This proclamation was like a trumpet call to the people. For the first time they were aroused to fight for their own independence and freedom, and even though the invocation came from a foreigner at the head of a foreign invading army, operating primarily in the interests of a foreign Power, the effect of the appeal on at least a part of the Italian people was magical. Even the treachery of Campoformio, whereby Venice was handed over to Austria with the same *sans gêne* as the hereditary dynasts had bartered peoples and territories, was not able wholly to dispel the effect of the creation of a really Italian State. The Cispadane Republic was the first modern State in Italy, with an efficient administration on the basis of civil and political equality ; though the suffrage was of a limited character based on wealth, a larger proportion of natives participated in public affairs than had ever been the case before. The new *régime* tended to eliminate the indifference to politics which had characterized the Italian people, and created a model for the Italy of the future. The very restrictions on national independence, the subjection of Italian interests to those of France, accentuated the national spirit and the desire for complete emancipation.

In the Papal States both the Government and the people

¹ It afterwards was styled the Cisalpine Republic.

were more backward than in any other part of Italy. The Government was a theocratic absolutism and a religious tyranny of a type created by the counter-Reformation of the seventeenth century, and practically unchanged since that period. There was practically no Liberalism among the people. The aristocracy, which was very wealthy and socially influential, remained unaffected by the new ideas, very backward as regards culture, and addicted to a life of idleness and splendour. The bourgeoisie hardly existed, and the masses were extremely ignorant. All power was in the hands of the priests, even the great nobles had none save purely representative duties, and were excluded from all real authority. The whole people were devoutly religious, and, if national feeling was non-existent, all felt a sort of pride in the Papacy as a worldwide institution. These remarks apply more particularly to the Roman Province; Umbria, the Marche, and the Romagna were more advanced and less under clerical influences; the last-named region, indeed, came more within the orbit of the ideas of the North, and was actually absorbed into the Cisalpine Republic.

The "Republicans" or "Patriots" in Rome were but a few hundreds, belonging almost exclusively to the bourgeoisie. The French Directory was determined to occupy Rome, but wished to keep up appearances as a liberating and not as a conquering Power, and its armies did not enter the city until 300 patriots had declared, by a national act, the abolition of the Temporal Power. Small as was the number of those who signed this declaration, the event was of considerable moral importance, as Professor Aldo Ferrari writes,¹ because the Papacy, regarding itself as an international rather than as an Italian institution, was the chief obstacle to Italian unity, and it was destined to remain such an obstacle for a longer period than any other organization. The abolition, however, was only made possible by the help of foreign bayonets protecting the 300 patriots, amidst a populace which was shouting: "Viva il Papa!" It is an irony of history that over half a century later the situation was reversed and the Temporal Power only maintained by the help of foreign bayonets.

In Naples the situation presented peculiar features. The

¹ *L'esplosione rivoluzionaria del Risorgimento*, p. 143.

Kingdom was the largest State in Italy, and since its separation from Spain the most independent except Piedmont. The feudal aristocracy was more powerful and factious than in other parts of Italy, and often in revolt against feeble kings. Under Charles V. and Philip II. its power was broken, and Spanish rule, with all its faults, had the merit of restoring order and security. During the seventeenth century the great feudal families and the town nobility declined in wealth and importance, and were replaced by a newer nobility of land speculators and lawyers, whose only idea of wealth was the acquisition or renting of land without any improvements, and who were usually absentees. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it was the Government—at first the Spanish Viceroy, and later, with greater energy, King Charles III. and Ferdinand IV.—who protected the *cafoni* and *lazzaroni* against the worst abuses and put a restraint on the overbearing nobles and landlords. Both Kings were actuated, in the first instance, by a desire to assert the authority of the Crown and reduce the independence of the nobility, but they were genuinely anxious to improve the lot of the masses as conducive to the general welfare of the Kingdom. The result was that, although many abuses and much poverty still remained, the masses looked to the King as the “protector of the poor.”¹

Among the class of the *galantuomini* there was a small category of men of very high character and intellectual attainments who were imbued with the philosophy of the eighteenth century, and easily adopted French revolutionary ideas, which they wished to see extended to their own country. But they were so divorced from the mass of the people that when they talked of liberty and equality they did not for a moment consider the masses.

The Parthenopean Republic, under French auspices, was set up in 1799, but it was supported only by a small minority—the nobility of Naples, the higher clergy, and a part of the bourgeoisie. The provincial nobility, the lower clergy, and the whole of the proletariat were blindly attached to the King. The anti-religious measures of the

¹ B. Croce, “Intorno alla Storia del R. d. N.” in *La Critica*, September, 1923, p. 257; N. Rodolico, *Il popolo agli inizi del Risorgimento nell’Italia Meridionale*, pp. 4 et seq.

French irritated the people as a whole, and the exactions imposed by the French generals, and the plunder in which many of them indulged, made the new *régime* ever more unpopular, in spite of the real enthusiasm and self-sacrifice of the "Jacobins," as the Republicans came to be called. The sense of national independence (Neapolitan, of course, not Italian) was felt more keenly by the ignorant *cafoni* and *lazzaroni*, who associated it with devotion to the King and the Church, than by the Republican aristocracy, educated and inspired by cosmopolitan sentiments. "Trees of Liberty" were erected in every town and village, amid the enthusiasm of the few Republicans and the indifference or hostility of the masses. To the latter the French revolutionary ideas merely meant the means whereby the *galantuomini* would establish their power still more firmly without the restraints imposed on their abuses by the Crown. They associated intellectualism and culture with landlordism and oppression, and during the subsequent reaction men were lynched merely because they could read and write.

Italy was thus almost wholly under French domination. But if the old dynasties had fallen, the revolutionary idea could only survive as long as the French armies triumphed. Nowhere, not even in Lombardy where the advantages of the new *régime* were most apparent, did it find favour with more than a small minority. Nevertheless, the seed of the idea of the Italian nationality had been sown, and here and there was beginning to bear fruit. The Austrians had been expelled from North Italy as "the oppressors of the Italians"; the fact that the French remained and ruled the country primarily for the benefit of France helped to awaken the national sense. Moreover, the Directory conferred one inestimable benefit on Italy: it created a military organization in the Cisalpine Republic. This army, drilled and trained under French auspices, was the nucleus of the future Italian armies without which the Risorgimento could never have been achieved. This measure was to be greatly extended later under the Napoleonic *régime*.

The first French conquest of Italy was short-lived, and the reaction, stiffened by the Austrian armies, drove the French from the country. Everywhere the masses, together with a part of the aristocracy and of the clergy, supported the restoration, and it was seen on what unstable founda-

tions the revolutionary idea rested. The reaction was ferocious in many parts of the country, even in Tuscany, where the mild peasantry had been goaded to fury by the exactions of the French and by their war on religion. In Naples, once the bulk of the French forces was withdrawn, the bands organized in Calabria by Cardinal Ruffo, and led by him to the capital, swept all before them, and the British fleet caused the fall of the Republic.

As Professor Ferrari says, the Neapolitan Republicans were dreamers and idealists, but they retrieved the errors of their administration and their neglect to ameliorate the lot of the people by the heroism with which they faced imprisonment and death at the hands of the King and of the infuriated mob. The King, moreover, showed no gratitude whatever towards the poor *cafoni* and *lazzaroni* to whom he owed his restoration, but only thought of wreaking his vengeance on the Republicans. This conduct was not without effect on the subsequent events, and when Napoleon five years later sent another army into the Neapolitan provinces and decreed the deposition of the Bourbon dynasty, the people this time offered no resistance, and Joseph Bonaparte was able to ascend the throne of Naples and establish his rule almost unopposed.

Marengo gave Italy once more to Napoleon, now First Consul. Had the Austrians and the deposed despots behaved with wisdom and generosity after the expulsion of the French, the restored *régimes* would have been supported by practically the whole population. But they did not, and Napoleon's second conquest was comparatively easy. He himself was also more moderate; he no longer had to render himself the interpreter of the fanatical Republicanism of the Directory; he did not make war on religion, but showed favour to the clergy, and tried to secure the support of the aristocracy and the moderate elements. The Cisalpine Republic was recreated and given a Constitution at Lyons (1802), with a very limited measure of popular sovereignty. Bonaparte himself was elected President, with Francesco Melzi as Vice-President. Amidst general acclamation, the Assembly assumed the name of Italian instead of Cisalpine Republic; thereby, for the first time in many centuries, the name of Italy was given to an Italian State.

With the creation of the Empire, the Italian Republic was converted into a Kingdom. A small Papal State still existed, but in 1809 Napoleon, invoking the right of Charlemagne which he claimed had descended on him, declared the Temporal Power abolished for the second time.

Under the Empire Italy enjoyed many advantages. The administration was reformed, the country reconstructed on modern lines, the army strengthened and improved on the basis of conscription, and, if it operated under French leadership, it was now largely officered by Italians. In Naples political feudalism was abolished, but the economic feudal system could not be suppressed at once without encroaching on the rights of property, and the feudal nobles were only gradually expropriated, and with compensation from the beneficiaries. Everywhere trade and industry were freed from the shackles of internal customs and other obsolete handicaps, but exceptional favours were granted to French imports, and other limitations were imposed in connection with the Continental blockade. In Naples, under Murat, conscription was introduced and the organization of the army strengthened. Subsequently, contingents from all parts of Italy played a very distinguished part in the Napoleonic campaigns.

An increasing part of the aristocracy in all parts of Italy, on whom Napoleon conferred many favours, willingly accepted his rule. The middle classes on the whole were favourable, but were somewhat irritated at the vexatious commercial restrictions and the subordination of Italian to French interests; also they were dissatisfied at the absence of the political freedom which had been promised and which they alone really desired, and of any real independence. The clergy and the masses remained hostile, save a part of the Neapolitan clergy. In the Italian Kingdom there was a larger element favourable to the new *régime* than in other parts of Italy, as the State was better organized and administered.

Sicily and Sardinia remained wholly outside the Napoleonic orbit; the former was under Bourbon rule, but tempered by a British protectorate. A Constitution on the English model was introduced, far more liberal than those conferred by Napoleon, but the people were not

educated up to it. Sardinia remained under the Savoy dynasty, which took refuge in the island after its expulsion from its mainland possessions.

With the fall of Napoleon all the vassal States fell likewise. The Italian Kingdom might, perhaps, have survived if the people had been unanimous. But the Viceroy, Eugène Beauharnais, had many enemies, the fiscal exactions had been severe, and the drafting of conscripts into the Napoleonic armies to serve in distant lands, if it was useful as a military education and proved valuable in the long run, was unpopular at the time. A popular tumult at Milan enabled the Austrians to reoccupy Lombardy without opposition.

But the Italian idea was not dead; it was fermenting in many minds and many forms, and if its supporters were still a minority, they comprised many men of influence. One party in Lombardy, indeed, called itself the *Italicì puri*, led by Count Confalonieri and composed of nobles and bourgeois, demanded a constitution and independence, but excluded the Viceroy. While Napoleon was in exile at Elba, a group of fourteen Italians, ex-officers and civil servants of the Napoleonic *régime*, among whom were Melchiorre Gioia, Luigi Delfico and Count Pellegrino Rossi, met at Turin on the night of May 19th, 1814, and sent an address to the Emperor, offering him the Crown of Italy, on condition that he undertook to renounce his conquests and govern constitutionally. The Constitution, drafted by Delfico, was based on the three principles of equality, liberty, and nationality, and provided for the erection of Italy into a Kingdom with Rome as its capital, the Pope to be indemnified for the loss of the Temporal Power by a sum of 20,000,000 francs, and divided into four viceroyalties.

Napoleon accepted the scheme, and in October, 1814, he made the following statement:

"I shall make of the peoples of Italy a single nation; I shall impress on them unity of manners and customs, which is at present lacking, and this will be the most difficult enterprise which I have ever undertaken. . . . I shall give the Italians laws suitable for them. I could not give them hitherto anything save provisional measures: I shall give them something, which will last as long as the

Empire. . . . Within twenty years Italy will have 30,000,000 inhabitants: then she will be the most powerful nation in the world, and as inaccessible to invasion as Russia. We shall abstain from wars of conquest, but I shall have a brave and powerful army. I shall write on the standards my motto of the Iron Crown, 'Woe to him who touches it,' and no one will dare to do so. After having been Scipio and Cæsar in France, I shall be Camillus in Rome; the foreigner shall cease to tread on the Capitol and shall never reappear there again."

But Napoleon was unable or unwilling to carry out this undertaking, even if he had ever really intended to do so. The Hundred Days followed, and then his final fall. Murat alone, who at first had deserted him and then turned against the Austrians, attempted with rare incompetence to carve out an independent kingdom for himself at the very moment when the whole Napoleonic edifice was crumbling. He undoubtedly perceived that certain ideas engendered by the Revolution and the Napoleonic *régime* were germinating among the Italian people, but he expected to exploit them chiefly for his own ambitions. He promised a constitution and raised the flag of Italian independence and unity. The famous proclamation of Rimini (March 30th, 1815) was a forlorn hope as far as Murat's own dreams and ambitions were concerned, and produced no immediate effect, but it profoundly affected political thought in Italy and had a decided bearing on future political events. It was, as Professor Ferrari writes,¹ the first time that a constituted Government made a definite political affirmation of such a programme. For Murat spoke of the freedom and independence, no longer of his own Kingdom of Naples only, but of that of all Italy. The proclamation aroused the enthusiasm of a small group of intellectuals, such as the dramatist G. B. Niccolini, the poets Berchet, Silvio Pellico and Alessandro Manzoni, who then wrote his first political ode, "*Liberi non saremo se non siam uni.*"

But at the time the ideas embodied in the proclamation still appealed only to a small minority, while Murat's own position was more than precarious, and his scheme of a free Italy collapsed with his own fall. It is, indeed, doubtful whether he himself was in earnest or merely seeking for

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 339.

a diversion capable of bolstering up his own power. He was, in all probability, far too devoid of seriousness of purpose to be able to carry out such a plan. Nevertheless, his idea was destined to bear fruit in the future, for he "built better than he knew."

By the Vienna Treaties of 1815 the old *régimes* were restored throughout Italy, with but slight changes.

If political ideas during the period of the French Revolution and of the Napoleonic Empire were by no means diffused among the Italian people, nor even to any large extent among the intellectuals, a small group of thinkers had at last begun to work out the political problem of Italy on the triple basis of independence, unity, and liberty. Of the three ideals fostered by the French generals and statesmen, that of independence, which their very presence in Italy violated, although it was always on their lips, appealed to the largest number of people.

The ideal of liberty appealed chiefly to a few doctrinaire philosophers and to enthusiasts of the Revolution, but commanded no general consensus, and was not felt by the Italians as a whole.

Unity was even less generally desired, as it ran counter to the mass of local prejudice, and had absolutely no foundations in the traditions of the past.

Of the various writers who devoted serious attention to the question of Italy's future and evolved systematic schemes for its solution, two have a particularly important place as precursors of the Risorgimento—Melchiorre Gioia and Vincenzo Cuoco. Gioia (1767-1829), a priest of Parma, who as early as 1797 published an essay which secured the first prize in the competition promoted by the Administration of Lombardy, on the theme "Which of the free governments is best suited for the happiness of Italy." His essay was entitled "*Dissertazione su quale dei Governi liberi meglio convenga all' Italia*," and set forth the Italian problem in a clearer and more complete form than had ever been attempted before. He advocated independence of foreign rule, the unity of the whole of Italy in a single State under a Republican Government rather than a federation of States, as best calculated to defend Italian freedom and independence against Austria, the constitution to be modelled partly on that of France of 1795,

but with some substantial modifications. This scheme was undoubtedly the first real programme of the Risorgimento, and pointed to Austria as the chief enemy of Italy. Mazzini himself recognized Gioia as the greatest of his precursors. Gioia afterwards became an official of the Cisalpine and then of the Italian Republic, but showed an independent spirit and frequently criticized in the Press the insolence, exactions, and robberies of the French. He strongly advocated the formation of an Italian army, which should make the presence of French forces in Italy unnecessary.

The works of the Neapolitan writer Vincenzo Cuoco (1770-1823) concerned the Kingdom of Naples exclusively, but many of his judgments were applicable to the rest of Italy as well. Cuoco was a student of philosophy and jurisprudence, and particularly imbued with the theories of Vico. When the French Revolution broke out he followed the new movement of ideas with interest, but was far from being a fanatical enthusiast of them. On the foundation of the Parthenopean Republic under French auspices, Cuoco played no important part in it, but under the rule of Joseph Bonaparte and Murat he filled various public offices, devoting himself in particular to education. His political ideas are embodied in his "*Saggio sulla Rivoluzione napoletana*," a sort of philosophical criticism of the Parthenopean Republic, written in exile, his collected articles and letters, a political novel, *Platone in Italia*, and his report to King Joachim on education. In criticizing Mario Pagano's constitution of the Republic, he pointed out the absence of the revolutionary spirit among the Neapolitan people and said that the Constitution was a foreign importation. The Neapolitan revolution was consequently a passive revolution introduced by the French, existing only on French support, and arousing enthusiasm exclusively among the select few. Throughout his writings he repeatedly insists on the weakness of a movement imported from abroad and not based on the real needs and tendencies of the people. The chief obstacle to its success was the administration and imitation of foreign examples which delayed the progress of Neapolitan culture even in Bourbon times. The existing culture "was different from that which the whole nation required and which could be hoped for only from the development of our own faculties." In another passage he states that

"the ideas of the Neapolitan revolution might have been popular if they had been drawn from the very heart of the nation. Having instead been drawn from a foreign country, they were very far from ours." He also believed that no revolution could succeed save under the firm leadership of one man. Cuoco, while penetrating so acutely, perhaps without fully realizing it, into the Neapolitan revolutionary movement, reveals the mystery of the whole of the Italian Risorgimento—a movement not destined to succeed until it evolved on an Italian basis and proved capable of supporting itself by Italian arms, even though foreign arms helped it to achieve some of its objects. Cuoco maintained that if the support of the people for the new order was to be secured, it was necessary to create in the people that national conscience which was then lacking. In his novel, *Platone in Italia*, he says that Italy comprises such a variety of natural and historic conditions, and peoples of such different characteristics, that if they remain divided these various peoples will fight each other to destruction, whereas, if they are united, they will dictate laws to the universe. In his report on education he deplored the absence of patriotic feeling, of the military spirit, and of "that noble sense of pride which alone inspires great nations." He strongly advocated the equality of all citizens, the independence and national unity of the whole of Italy and not of Naples alone, but did not trouble about constitutional liberty, being satisfied with an illuminated and efficient despotism of a Bonapartist type. "The so highly vaunted balance of power in Europe can but be entrusted to Italian independence. . . . If I were to speak to the French Government on behalf of Italy, I should say to it frankly that it should liberate her entirely or not trust her. Italy must not be divided but united."

Cuoco was the first writer to insist vigorously on the necessity for unity, even more so than Gioia. But the idea was as yet felt, as I have pointed out, less keenly than that of independence or constitutional liberty, as the majority of the Italian population were still attached to their local States, and, moreover, hardly anyone believed that unity was within the sphere of practical politics, whereas independence and liberty appeared much more possible.

II

THE RESTORATION

THE restoration of the deposed princes in 1815 did not at first appear to the bulk of the Italians, any more than to the other peoples of Europe, a disaster. What everyone was yearning for, after twenty-five years of revolution and war, was peace. In Italy, whose sons had been conscripted to fight, in Spain, in Germany, in Russia, for a cause which was not their own, and where the new *régimes* set up by the French Revolution and the Empire were supported only by a minority, the desire for peace was exceptionally strong. The much-maligned Congress of Vienna did give Europe peace for thirty-three years, and enabled the peoples of Europe to recover from the shock of the preceding upheaval. Had it shown more respect for national sentiment, as distinguished from the constitutional movements and revolutionary agitations of various kinds, the order of things then established might have lasted even longer.

But in the minds of the diplomats congregated at Vienna, national patriotic sentiment, which the French Revolution had aroused, was so closely associated with the ideas of Liberalism and Democracy that they were firmly convinced that subversive ideas could not be crushed unless nationalism were also eliminated. The reconstruction of Europe was therefore carried out regardless of national feeling. Italy was kept divided, and, except for the Sardinian Kingdom, all more or less under Austrian rule.

Austria's policy, as embodied in Metternich, was not then that of one victorious nation ruling and oppressing subject nationalities. It was based on the principle of autocracy, regarded as the one safeguard against revolutionary agitation and war. Metternich was a pacifist, and if he oppressed the nationalities under Austria it was

because he disliked all forms of nationalism—that of the Germans not less than that of the Italians. It was his pacifist and anti-revolutionary attitude which secured him the support of Great Britain, although that Power, unlike Austria, was essentially a nation-State. Even the language question, which was afterwards to loom so large in all national disputes, did not interest Metternich. What he feared was the attempt to unify peoples of the same nationality, thereby constituting a menace to the well-ordered *régime* established at Vienna. The bases of the Vienna Congress policy were thus the maintenance of international peace, internal order, legitimacy, the inviolability of and unswerving respect for treaties, and the protection of religion. The Italian national movement, although only in its beginnings, was regarded as a menace to these fundamental principles.

Moreover, the war-weary peoples might even have submitted to the double thralldom of foreign rule and native despotism if the returned Austrians and native despots had been more intelligent. But they were cruel and oppressive, because they were both stupid and frightened. They tried to restore the whole of the system existing before 1789, as though the French Revolution and the Napoleonic *régime* had never occurred. Consequently, the sense of relief at the close of the long years of disturbance was attenuated by the system of oppression, the evils of which gradually came to be realized by an ever-increasing body of citizens.

The Liberal spirit—I use the term Liberal as applying to all the various aspects of hostility to the existing reaction—and the sense of nationality, still comparatively limited, found expression only in the works of certain philosophers and writers, the spiritual successors of Gioia and Cuoco, and in a series of partial revolutionary movements in different regions of Italy. These outbreaks, although they led to no consequences at the time, were symptomatic of the feeling in Italy, and prepared the way for the wider movements of the years to come. They failed for three reasons: first, because they were local and un-coordinated with each other; second, because all the forces of reaction, both at home and abroad, were still very powerful and coalesced against them; and, third, because the mass of the people were as yet too little interested in the national

revolutionary idea to give them any wide measure of support.

The Neapolitan rising of 1820 was essentially a Constitutional movement, and its immediate cause had been the first successes of the Spanish Constitutional rising. It implied no hostility to the dynasty, but only demanded the adoption by King Ferdinand of the Spanish Constitution of 1812, an unworkable and unsuitable charter in the thau-maturgical effects of which, however, the Neapolitan Liberals had blind confidence. It was promoted by the survivors of the Republican movement of 1799 and the Carbonari, members of the then most important of the secret societies, founded under the Napoleonic *régime*, but of still older origins. The King, terrified as he had been in 1799, gave way without resistance, allowed the Parliament to be summoned, and swore on the Bible to respect the Constitution. But he was already meditating the violation of his oath.

Austria was much more alarmed by this movement than by the contemporary one of Spain, because it was more likely to affect other parts of Italy, notably her own Italian provinces. As early as July 25th Metternich informed the German princes that he could not tolerate a revolution in Naples, and that he would not hesitate, if necessary, to suppress it by force, as the secret Austro-Neapolitan Treaty of June 12th, 1815, entitled him to do. King Ferdinand was invited to attend a Congress at Laibach in January, 1821, and the moment he arrived there he denounced the Constitution and applied for Austrian help to suppress it. The Congress agreed to Austrian intervention, and an Austrian army entered Neapolitan territory, completely defeated General Pepe's ill-organized forces at Rieti, and occupied Naples, followed soon after by the King, who suppressed the Parliament and commenced persecutions against all who had participated in the movement. The Neapolitan revolution was purely local in character and wholly unconnected with similar agitations in other parts of Italy, although it did indirectly affect them.

The Piedmontese movement was hastened on by the news of the apparent success of the Neapolitans, and was of a somewhat more Italian character. It, too, was not anti-dynastic, but merely Constitutional, and most of its leaders

were sincerely devoted to the House of Savoy. The Piedmontese Liberals felt especial confidence in the heir-presumptive to the throne, Charles Albert, whom they regarded as one of themselves. The King, Victor Emmanuel I., abdicated in favour of his brother, Charles Felix, who, being then at Modena, entrusted the regency to Charles Albert. The rebels induced the latter to grant the Spanish Constitution of 1812, and this he did, although he made it clear that he could not pledge the new King. Charles Felix thereupon hurried to Turin, ordered Charles Albert to leave the city, and some detachments of troops faithful to him, assisted by an Austrian force, defeated the Constitutionals at Novara, and the charter was revoked. The movement had been less local than that of Naples. Santorre di Santarosa and his companions looked beyond Turin, raised the Tricolour, demanded not only a Constitution for Piedmont, but an Italian confederation or Kingdom under the House of Savoy and war against Austria, thereby cutting the connection between that House and the Habsburgs. The Savoia must be saved in spite of themselves, Santarosa declared, so that they may be worthier of the great mission assigned to them by God. As Professor Volpe writes, this was the first real organized attempt to bind the House of Savoy to Italy, through an initiative coming from the people, although as yet the people were not prepared for it.¹

Several of the leaders were imprisoned, and others found safety in exile, but there were no prosecutions similar to those of Naples, and there was no divorce between the Monarchy and the people, although Charles Albert was very severely attacked by the Liberals for what was regarded by them as treachery towards the cause.

No risings broke out in the rest of Italy in connection with these two movements, but there were plots in Lombardy against the Austrian *régime*, and a number of prominent citizens of the highest character, including the poet Silvio Pellico and Count Confalonieri, were arrested and condemned to long terms of imprisonment. Pellico's beautiful book, *Le mie prigioni*, did more to arouse feeling throughout Italy and abroad against the Austrian oppressors than the previous risings had done. Above all,

¹ *Momenti di storia italiana*, p. 292.

it helped to concentrate the revolutionary sentiment into anti-Austrian channels.

In July, 1830, the Constitutional revolution broke out in France, and resulted in the deposition and flight of Charles X. and the assumption to the throne of the more Liberal Louis Philippe. This movement had immediate effects in Italy, as it offered an example of a successful movement of moderate character, and secured the support of those who favoured Liberal reforms, but had no sympathy with extreme Jacobinism and Republicanism, and it was hoped that the Liberals triumphant in France would assist those of their own way of thinking in Italy. Revolutionary outbreaks took place in Modena and also throughout Romagna against the intolerable misgovernment of the Pope. The Cardinal Legate fled from Bologna, where the Tricolour was raised and a Provisional Government proclaimed. Within a fortnight the Pope had lost four-fifths of his dominions, and the national congress of Bologna declared the unity of Italy to be its object. The rising in the Papal States was almost entirely the work of the secret societies, which were particularly active in the Romagna and the Marche. Their aspirations were at first not very clear, but they appear to have been in favour of a united Republican Italy. Their ceremonies were mysterious, melodramatic, and would have been ridiculous if it had not been for the dangers to which they exposed those who took part in them. But they undoubtedly fostered a taste for plotting and conspiring which survived the period of their usefulness, while their secrecy and ritual continued to appeal to a part of the Italian people long after these features had lost all meaning. Among the Carbonari there were many men of the highest character, ready to sacrifice everything, even life itself, which they often did, for the cause they advocated, but, as Ernesto Masi wrote, side by side with them "the weak, the vainglorious, the blackguards, the false martyrs were not lacking."¹

During the troubles of Naples and Piedmont, in 1820 and 1821, the Romagnol societies had taken no action, for, although the Carbonari believed theoretically in a united Italy, they were still too local in their outlook to take practical measures for co-operating with the Liberals of other

¹ *Nell'Ottocento*, p. 112.

parts of Italy. What induced them to rise ten years later was the general course of political events outside Italy, particularly the July Revolution in Paris, followed by the revolutions of Belgium and Poland. The declaration of policy in favour of non-intervention expressed in General Sebastiani's statement led the Romagna patriots to believe that France would prevent Austria from intervening in Italian affairs. The new revolutionary State assumed the style of Government of the United Provinces, and raised an army which comprised many veterans of the Napoleonic wars, notably Generals Zucchi and Sercognani. What was even more significant was the presence in Sercognani's forces of the two sons of Queen Hortense, sister-in-law of the great Napoleon. The elder of the brothers died of illness, but the younger, Louis Napoleon, the future Emperor of the French, took part in several actions, in which he showed considerable gallantry. He never afterwards forgot his interest in the cause of Italian freedom, even when his policy, owing to the pressure of certain sections of French opinion, was driven counter to it.

There was, however, even then no idea of a movement definitely in favour of Italian unity, and the majority of the Liberals would have been satisfied with a measure of moderate reform in the administration of the various States, and occasionally there was a definite demand for a Constitution.

It is among the men of letters that we find a more general aspiration for the liberty and unity of Italy. Ugo Foscolo, full of classical reminiscences, had appealed to Napoleon to convert himself into a Washington to create a free and united Italy,¹ but it cannot be said that he did very materially contribute to promote the evolution of the idea. The romantic literary movement went a considerable step further, and its first activities appeared at Milan with the paper, *Il Conciliatore*, to which Count Confalonieri, Silvio Pellico, G. D. Romagnosi, and other writers contributed. Although at first the character of this journal was purely literary, it gradually trespassed into the forbidden ground of politics, reviving memories of the *Regno Italico*, which stood for the only approach to a free Italy which had until then ever materialized. The paper was suppressed in 1819,

¹ A. Oriani, *La lotta politica in Italia*, vol. ii., p. 353.

and the group dispersed. Another literary movement was that of the *Antologia*, founded by the Genevese Vieusseux, who had settled in Florence and gathered around him the leading men of letters of Tuscany. Alessandro Manzoni, a Lombard, who had come to Florence to purify his style and re-write his famous *Promessi Sposi* in good Tuscan, led a literary movement which regarded resignation to the inevitable as necessary for the Italian nation, Catholicism as the only consolation, and insisted on the virtues of the people in contrast with the shortcomings of their rulers. The Tuscan Guerrazzi, on the other hand, was a *frondeur* and rebellious spirit, an admirer of Byron, an anti-Clerical, full of invective, and a hater of foreign domination. His historical novels, especially *L'Assedio di Firenze* and *La Bottaglia di Benevento*, were written to expose the evils of foreign rule in Italy. Niccolini, too, in his somewhat heavy and turgid tragedies, makes his characters deliver rhetorical speeches against tyranny. Giuseppe Giusti, a greater poet than any of them, incited the people with his brilliant satires to despise all authority.

We have here the germs of the conflict which was to last down to our times between Catholicism and patriotism. But one group of patriots tried to eliminate it by giving a moral and religious character to the struggle for Italian freedom. Giuseppe Mazzini was the first to make the attempt, and although his religion was not strictly orthodox, it was sufficiently strong to prevent patriotism from being wholly associated with free-thought and atheism. The scientific congresses and the books published under their auspices also helped the slow spread of the Italian idea.

During this same period another man of letters destined to influence his countrymen more than any of his predecessors now made his appearance. Vincenzo Gioberti was a Piedmontese priest and a devout Catholic, but politically his ideas were regarded as revolutionary, and in 1833 he was actually arrested and banished without a trial, and lived for seven years in Paris and Brussels. He was the founder of what is known as the Neo-Guelf school, his aspiration being in favour of a revival of the authority of the Papacy in Italy for the elevation of the Italian people; later in his famous treatise, *Il primato morale e civile*

degli Italiani (first published in 1846), he set forth the daring theory of the superiority of the Italian people over others.

Like Gioberti, Carlo Cattaneo and Giuseppe Ferrari advocated the Federal theory and sought to present it as a revival of the genuine Italian historic tradition. Gioberti was indeed destined to attempt to put the theory into practice, and although as a statesman he proved unsuccessful, there is no doubt that the mere presentation of the view of Italy's moral and civil primacy was a powerful incentive to a national revival.

The revolution of 1831 was the last of the regional risings. The next step was to be a series of movements of a national character. Their inspirer was Giuseppe Mazzini, and while the methods he employed were wholly out of keeping with the results aimed at, and in some cases were a handicap to the progress of the national idea, there is no doubt that he was the first man to have a precise and definite conception of Italian unity.

The moment was one of the most tragic in modern Italian history. The outbreaks of Naples, Turin, and the Romagna had failed completely and ignominiously. Reaction was everywhere triumphant and apparently all-powerful and solidly supported by the reactionary Governments abroad, the revolutionists had shown themselves hopelessly incompetent and without good leaders, and the masses had given them no support. An exile living at Marseilles, Mazzini appealed to the youth of Italy, particularly to the exiles abroad, with an idea of extreme and logical simplicity—that of an Italy which should be neither the unity of the Roman Empire, nor Catholic unity, nor the Italy of Medieval communes and principalities, but that of a single Italy, united and free both from foreign rule and native tyranny, Republican on the lines of the French Revolution, but guided by a mystic religious spirit, essentially Christian, yet untrammelled by Catholic theocracy. On this basis he formed the organization known as the *Giovane Italia*, which as early as 1833 had 60,000 members. He had a touching belief in the virtues of the people as contrasted with the shortcomings of their rulers, a belief which was not justified by the real character and ideas of the Italians of the day, but which in itself proved a powerful incentive

to innumerable patriots. His definite political conceptions were only tried once, when he was at the head of the Roman Republic of 1849, and then they proved unworkable. But his idea—almost his obsession—of Italy united and free, was the real lever of the Italian revolution; he never swerved from it, and he kept it as a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of smoke by day to guide all the various revolutionary agitations towards the ultimate goal, even those movements which were led by men differing widely from him in political theory and temper.

His mystical Christianity was a force attracting to him at one time all the idealist youth of Italy, but as Alfredo Oriani rightly says,¹ he lacked the sense of hate, and this was a weakness in a revolutionary, which appeared with disastrous consequences in the days of the Roman Republic. With him unity, independence, freedom, and the Republic were inseparable terms, but the first three were the most important, and at one moment he was ready to sacrifice the fourth to them, declaring himself willing to accept the Monarchy if it secured them. But when the Monarchy proved itself the real beacon of light guiding Italy towards independence, freedom, and unity, he could not rid himself of his old Republican prejudices, and he tried to obstruct its path, thereby risking the achievement of his other aspirations. Even after the Monarchy was finally established and accepted by the immense majority of the Italian people, he continued to coquet with revolution in favour of a Republic. His last days were a tragedy, inasmuch as he failed to realize the immensity of his success in his disappointment at the failure of the Republican idea.

During the period from 1815 to 1848 we find three main tendencies developing among Italian political thinkers, which, from vague inchoate aspirations, year by year become clearer and more definite. One was hostility to the foreigner. This was strongest in Lombardy and Venetia, where Austria ruled, and where the memories of the *Regno Italico*, on the one hand, and of the Venetian Republic, loved even in its extreme decrepitude, on the other, were living forces. It also existed in other parts of Italy, for if there the Governments were at least nominally Italian, those of Modena, Parma, and Tuscany were under direct

¹ *Op. cit.*, vol. ii., p. 81.

Austrian influence, and those of Naples and Rome knew they could always rely on foreign support. Alfieri, Botta, and other writers had also instilled into a part of the Italian Liberals hatred of France, for her share in enslaving Italy in the past. The other two tendencies, federalism and unity, reflecting the future government of Italy, at first divided public opinion. Should Italy ever be freed of foreign rule, under what system would she evolve, which was the most practically possible, which the best suited to her spirit and national genius?

On the one hand there was the fact of the existence of the various States, and this must be taken into account. If, by a miracle, the foreigner should be driven out or withdraw voluntarily, it seemed hardly likely that another miracle could also overthrow the local dynasties, least of all the Papacy. Nor did the bulk of public opinion at first even demand it. At the same time, we have the first beginnings of an aspiration towards an integral solution—Italy independent of foreign rule and influence, united in a single State, and endowed with Liberal institutions.

In 1844 a new revolutionary attempt was made, which, if no more successful than the others, even from the point of view of securing any measure of popular support, was of an essentially more national character, and therefore of greater moral significance. The brothers Emilio and Attilio Bandiera, although officers in the Austrian navy, were imbued with the idea of Italian liberty, and they entered into correspondence with Mazzini, secretly joined the *Giovane Italia* and deserted to Corfu. In agreement with Mazzini, they and some twenty other exiles crossed over to Italy and landed in Calabria. A traitor among the party had denounced them. The local population took them for Turkish corsairs, and assisted the police in capturing them. They were arrested, tried, condemned, and executed. The significance of the episode lies in its Italian character. It was no longer a Neapolitan, a Piedmontese, or Romagnol rising against local oppression, but the first attempt at an Italian rising, conducted by persons from Northern Italy to liberate the Neapolitans.

In the meanwhile, between the intellectual advocates of the Italian cause, with their two tendencies—the Mazzinian revolutionary Republican tendency and that of the Re-

formist Federalists personified in Gioberti—the wordy quarrel proceeded apace. The Federal idea appealed to the majority of those who thought about the problem at all, as it conciliated regional jealousies with the Liberal idea, devotion to the Monarchical principle (although Gioberti himself in his youth had had Republican leanings), and the interests of the upper classes, respect for Catholicism with the idea of Italian freedom, while it united all in the one notion of hostility to foreign domination. The Mazzinian idea, on the other hand, offended the regional spirit, alarmed the upper classes owing to Mazzini's constant appeal to the "people" alone, outraged those who believed in Monarchy, especially in Piedmont, where the dynasty, although reactionary, was native and popular, and Mazzini's own mystical and very unorthodox Christianity failed to satisfy real Catholics. Gioberti's *Primato*, first printed in 1846, had an immense success, and was read throughout Italy. Monsignor Mastai, Bishop of Imola, afterwards Pope Pius IX., read it and was impressed by it. It was almost the first attempt in modern times to make the Italian people think of themselves not as inferior to all other peoples, but superior. Gioberti affirmed boldly that "Italy has in herself, especially by means of religion, all the conditions necessary for her national and political *Risorgimento*, and has no need, in order to give it effect, of internal revolutions or foreign invasions or imitations."¹

Cesare Balbo, in his *Speranze d'Italia*, took a somewhat similar line. He, too, was a Federalist, but he had greater hope in the Piedmontese Monarchy than in the Papacy. He ignored the more serious problems of unity and freedom and hoped that the independence of Lombardy and Venetia from Austrian rule might be secured diplomatically if Austria obtained a large part of the Turkish heritage in exchange for her Italian possessions. Neither Balbo nor Gioberti advocated war against Austria or a revolution, but they so presented the Italian problem as to make both inevitable.

¹ *Primato*, 2nd edition, p. 30.

III

THE WARS OF INDEPENDENCE

THE varied political agitations and vague aspirations towards an Italian nation were greatly aroused on the election of Cardinal Giovanni Maria Mastai to the Papacy as Pius IX. His predecessor, Gregory XVI., had incarnated the reactionary Clerical spirit, and public opinion had invested the new Pontiff with Liberal views. His record as Bishop of Imola had been a good one, and there he had notoriously been on terms of friendship with Marco Minghetti, Giuseppe Pasolini, and other prominent Liberals. He was known to have read and believed to have approved of such works as Gioberti's *Primato*, Balbo's *Speranze d'Italia*, and D'Azeglio's *Ultimi casi di Romagna*. The Liberals from all over Italy acclaimed him as the new Messiah who would reconcile the irreconcilable terms—Italian liberty and a Papacy invested with Temporal Power. Even Mazzini from London and Garibaldi from South America sent him letters of encouragement, expressing their devotion to him.

His first measures, particularly the political amnesty of July 16th, 1846, the creation in 1847 of the Consulta di Stato, a sort of advisory Parliament, such as Gioberti had advocated as a first step towards Constitutional government, and certain other reforms, gave colour to his alleged Liberalism, filling the Italian Liberals with enthusiasm and Metternich with alarm.

In all the other Italian States political ferment was growing in intensity, and demands for reforms were urged forward with ever-increasing insistence, and some of the despots appeared willing to grant them. But the political instinct of the nation began to look towards Charles Albert, King of Sardinia, as the most likely leader of a national revolution. In spite of his alleged betrayal of the Liberal movement in 1821, his hatred of Austria—the chief passion of his life—was notorious. Piedmont alone, more-

over, had a well-organized army, imbued with excellent military traditions, and the military record of the dynasty was an admirable one. There was, above all, one man in the Kingdom who was beginning to formulate a well-defined political conception, destined to inspire the whole course of Italian history in the next twenty years—that of an Italy independent, united, and free. This man was Count Camillo Cavour, then under thirty years of age, interested in the economic development of Piedmont and in the improvement of his own estates, but also a careful observer of political and economic development in Italy and other countries. In the paper founded and edited by him, *Il Risorgimento*—its title was to give a name to the whole Italian revolutionary movement—he first began tentatively to advocate the ideas which were afterwards to find complete expression in the political events of Italy.

The extreme reactionary measures enacted to repress the political agitation in the Kingdom of Naples resulted in a revolutionary outbreak at Palermo on January 12th, 1848, which gave the signal for similar movements throughout Italy and Europe. The various sovereigns of Italy were terrified into promulgating Constitutions. Ferdinand of Naples was the first (January 29th, 1848); the others followed suit in February and March. Everywhere the Constitutional movement marched *pari passu* with the demands for the raising of armies to wage war against Austria, and all looked to Piedmont to lead the way.

The revolutionary agitations abroad encouraged the Liberals of all shades throughout Italy. From Venice the Austrians were peacefully expelled in March and a Republic proclaimed, while in Milan a popular revolution broke out, and after five days' desperate fighting drove Radetzky and the Austrian garrison from the city. The events in Italy resulted in Sardinia's declaration of war against Austria. The Sardinian army, gallant but small, inadequately equipped and badly led, entered Lombardy and Venetia, achieved some initial successes, and found support in the contingents supplied by the Pope and the King of Naples. But this assistance was of greater moral than military value, as the troops, although filled with patriotic enthusiasm, had none of the military training and traditions of the Sardinian force.

In the meanwhile the anti-national reactionary forces were gathering strength. The revolutions in Austria-Hungary and Germany were crushed, and large reinforcements could be sent to Italy. The Pope, by his Encyclical of April 29th, 1848, condemned the war which his own army was waging against Austria, and Ferdinand of Naples followed suit. The action of these sovereigns weakened the national movement and created a divided allegiance, but, on the other hand, it strengthened the unifying movement centring round Piedmont, inasmuch as the Nationalist elements in the non-Piedmontese forces continued to fight against Austria, no longer as Papal, Neapolitan, or Tuscan contingents, but incorporated in the Piedmontese armies.

The Piedmontese advance, after the victories of Pastrengo, Goito, and Peschiera, was held up, and on the arrival of Austrian reinforcements the whole of the Veneto except Venice was lost, and at Custoza Charles Albert was defeated and forced to fall back on Milan. Political opposition to the King made the defence of that city impossible, and the Piedmontese withdrew beyond the Mincio and were obliged to agree to an armistice on August 9th, 1848.

Piedmont, like the other Italian States, now had its *statuto*, or Constitution, which was destined to become that of united Italy. The first acts of the Piedmontese Parliament were the ratification of the annexation of Lombardy, Venetia, Parma, and Modena. This strengthened the unifying tendency, and, although the results were short-lived, the foundations of the future Kingdom of Italy were laid.

Hostilities between Sardinia and Austria were resumed, and the Sardinian army was defeated at Novara. The King, Charles Albert, abdicated, and his son and successor, Victor Emmanuel II., mounted on the throne with a beaten army and the enemy in his own territory, demanding that he should violate his oath, as the other sovereigns of Italy had done, and abrogate the Constitution. But this he refused to do, thereby earning for himself a reputation for honesty and rectitude and the epithet of *Il Re Galantuomo* (the Gentleman King). But he did more than that. He established Piedmont and its Monarchy as the real nucleus of the future united Italy, round which all patriotic Italians would end by concentrating. The other despots were re-instated on their thrones by foreign arms. Rome, where an

idealistic republic under Mazzini had been set up, was besieged by the armies of that French Republic which professed to be the supporter of all Liberal and Nationalist movements, and defended by the condottiere Garibaldi, who at that siege established his fame as a strategic genius as well as a hero and a patriot. Even after he was forced to evacuate the city, his retreat was an epic poem appealing to the imagination of the whole world.¹ Thus Pius IX. was restored to his temporal dominions by foreign bayonets, and, thanks to them alone, was able to hold out for twenty-one years longer.

The restoration of the despots by foreign arms convinced all the politically-minded that the Italian question could only be solved without them and against them. After the defeat of Custoza in the campaign of 1848, Gioberti, who had become Prime Minister in December and tried to revive the old idea of a federation, had actually proposed that Piedmont should intervene on behalf of the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the Pope, so as to forestall foreign intervention. But it was too late for such a policy, and Gioberti had to resign after Novara, for, with the restoration of the depots through foreign arms, the idea of a confederation was dead and buried. Piedmont became the national centre of Italy and the focus of the Italian national cause.

Another result, although only incompletely achieved, was that public opinion began to realize the evils of divergent views over the future form of government. The idea of the necessity of expelling the Austrians was universally accepted; the hopelessness of trusting the native princes was almost equally generally grasped. Even Gioberti, in his *Rinnovamento civile degli Italiani* (published in 1851), abandoned the idea of a federation with the Pope as President, and advocated complete unity under Piedmont and the abolition of the Temporal Power of the Pope.

The idea of unity was growing and spreading among all parties, although there were still doubts as to its practicability and the means for carrying it out. Cavour himself was still uncertain, especially with regard to the Temporal Power of the Papacy, while others doubted if, even apart from the Papacy, unity were yet possible. Cavour, in his

¹ Nowhere is it so admirably and graphically and accurately described as in Trevelyan's *Garibaldi's Defence of the Roman Republic*.

first meeting with La Farina, one of the most active of the conspirators, in 1856 said: "I am confident that Italy will become a single State and that Rome will be her capital, but I do not know whether she is ready for this great transformation, as I do not know the other provinces."¹

The whole course of the Risorgimento was largely influenced by Great Britain. Apart from the definite acts and tendencies of the British Government and statesmen, often in opposition to the Queen, who had no sympathy for Italian national aspirations, the intellectual development of many Italian statesmen had been affected by English thought and the example of British political life. Cavour, above all, had a strong admiration for Great Britain, and had read deeply into the works of the great English writers, especially the economists—he defined political economy not "the dismal science," but "the science of the love of country"—and studied English institutions. Britain was for him the land of orderly liberty and the home of men who respected the law and lived according to it, and, as W. R. Thayer writes, "more by reasoned and orderly growth than other nations by revolution."² That was for Cavour the ideal political condition, and if he had afterwards to resort to revolution to achieve his political ends, the independence, unity, and freedom of Italy, he always hoped to see Italy a well-ordered, law-abiding community under a popular Monarchy, without dangerous revolutionary agitations within its borders. He published several essays on British questions, including one on Ireland, in which he expressed strong views against the repeal of the Union; he believed that separation would do Ireland more harm than good, and also he disliked the idea of anything which broke up the unity of the State, unity being one of his ideals for Italy. "From England," he said in his speech of February 9, 1859, "I have learned the greater part of the political notions which have guided me."

But he was not solely interested in British politics. The immense development of industry, steam navigation, and railways in Great Britain, and the consequent general increase of prosperity, profoundly impressed him. He first began to show the effects of his English experiences by

¹ Orsi, *Cavour*, pp. 149-150.

² *The Life and Times of Cavour*.

introducing improvements and modern machinery on his own estates, while in after life he was destined to try to introduce both English political methods and economic progress into Piedmont and then into united Italy. Not all of them were to prove suitable to Italian conditions, but they certainly gave the country its first impulse along the path of progress.

Cavour's method for promoting the liberation of Italy was by strengthening Piedmont, organizing the army, and effecting a careful diplomatic preparation for his policy.

Mazzini, on the other hand, believed unswervingly in unity, and this is his chief contribution to the *Risorgimento*. He was definitely against the Temporal Power, as its existence rendered unity impossible and constituted a centre of international and potentially hostile intrigue against national policy and security, even if the rest of Italy were united and free. In his method he differed far more radically from Cavour, for he put his whole trust in the people, and continued to advocate plots, conspiracies, and isolated outbreaks, and to preach his semi-political, semi-religious sermons, insisting on the necessity for the moral education of the Italian nation. While his moral propaganda undoubtedly did good, although not destined to bear fruit until later years, his conspiracies did not help the Italian cause to any great extent in Italy, and were definitely injurious to it abroad, as they tended to alienate the sympathies of foreign Governments and large sections of foreign public opinion.

There was still a division of opinion in Italy as to the future form of government to be established. While the majority was coming more and more to support the Monarchical idea and the Savoy dynasty, which offered the most practical solution of the national problem, Mazzini and the Democrats, for sentimental reasons, still advocated a Republic.

{ The period from 1849 to 1859 was known as the "decade of preparation," during which the errors of 1848 were realized and attention was concentrated on the best means of achieving the liberation of Italy, while avoiding the mistakes of the past. Those of little faith lost hope, but the more doughty never wavered. The divorce between the peoples and their rulers was now complete, for it was

obvious to all that none of the restored Governments could survive without the support of foreign arms. In Lombardy and Venetia, Parma, Modena, the Papal States, and Naples, reaction was worse than before, and the fact that men from all parts of Italy had for the first time fought together against the foreigner, and that all were united in defeat, also contributed to strengthen the national feeling.

The dominating factor of the period was the development of Piedmont under Cavour's leadership. If Piedmont was to be the nucleus of united Italy, it must make itself worthy of its mission by becoming the most civilized and progressive State in the peninsula. "In order," as Oriani writes, "to place itself, under the insidious observation of Austria, at the head of the national hopes, it must not only humiliate every other Italian State with the spectacle of its own Constitutional freedom, but, by developing on a small area all the energies of a great country, it must reconquer the esteem of Europe by means of works beyond its own strength."¹ The efforts made by the small Sub-Alpine Kingdom were marvellous. Cavour, in spite of the heavy burden of the war expenses and indemnity, did not hesitate to increase taxation and expenditure, built many railways, and even decided on the piercing of the Mont Cenis tunnel with the resources of Piedmont alone. He encouraged agriculture and industry, facilitated trade, concluded commercial treaties with France and Great Britain, and at the same time granted all the sums which General La Marmora demanded for the army, fortified Casale and Alessandria, and bought arms and equipment. Significant, too, was the movement of volunteers from other parts of Italy who enlisted in the Piedmontese army. Few at first in numbers, they gradually increased, and although even during the war of 1859 they were not overwhelmingly numerous, yet they contributed very largely to make the Piedmontese army Italian. Great improvements were effected in the schools, and the large number of distinguished scholars from other Italian States, driven into exile by persecution, concentrated an important part of the culture of Italy in Piedmont.

Cavour also undertook the reform of the ecclesiastical laws in order to modernize the country more rapidly; civil marriage was introduced, ecclesiastical property reorgan-

¹ *La lotta politica in Italia*, vol. ii., p., 316.

ized, and the Mendicant Orders were suppressed. These measures resulted in a violent quarrel with the Papacy, and marked the beginning of that rupture between the Italian State and the Papacy which was to play an important part in the subsequent history of the country.

As Piedmont was coming to dominate Italy, so Cavour dominated Parliament. An active but docile Liberal majority supported him; the extreme Right and the extreme Left did not count. The Government was personified in Cavour, who at one time held half a dozen portfolios, and all the departments felt the "Cavour touch."

But it was in the field of foreign policy that Cavour was most active in forging the liberation of Italy. His first and boldest move in this connection was his intervention in the Crimean War, in which his country had no ostensible interest. His Crimean policy, criticized at the time as a foolhardy adventure, was solely inspired by his desire to bring the Italian problem into the orbit of European diplomacy. He succeeded in getting the treaty through Parliament, presenting it, as it really was, in the light of a political act calculated to promote the Italian national cause. The Piedmontese contingent, small but well equipped and admirably disciplined, sailed for the Crimea and distinguished itself in action; on August 16th, at the Battle of the Tchernaya, it achieved a complete victory and thereby wiped out the tragic memory of Novara.

The effect of this success was magical. Those who had been filled with gloomy forebodings were cheered up, while the hopeful rejoiced and Cavour rubbed his hands—his habitual gesture of satisfaction—for his policy had been amply justified. Napoleon himself wrote to Victor Emmanuel on February 5th, 1856, the day that peace was concluded: "*Je prie V.M. de croire que je ferai mon possible pour que dans les négociations de paix les intérêts italiens ne soient point oubliés; mais je ne dissimule pas non plus toutes les difficultés que j'aurai à surmonter.*"¹ At the Paris Congress in 1856 Piedmont was admitted on a footing of equality with the other Powers, and Cavour succeeded in getting the Italian question discussed. As he declared in his speech in the Chamber after his return from Paris, if no immediate practical object had been attained,

¹ *Carteggio Cavour-Nigra*, vol. i., p. 40.

two things had been secured—first, that the unhappy state of Italy had been denounced before Europe, not by demagogues and revolutionaries, but by responsible statesmen representing the greatest Powers; and, second, that these Powers had admitted that to remedy the evils from which Italy was suffering was not merely an Italian, but a European interest. Piedmontese hegemony in Italy was also tacitly recognized.

Cavour's action revealed to the world what he was aiming at, and secured for him the support of ever-wider circles of Italian political thought. One of the most eminent converts was Daniele Manin, who has been described as the only real statesman revealed by the events of 1848-1849. Although a Republican and a Federalist, inspired by the traditions of the Venetian Republic, he now tried to lead public sentiment towards Piedmont as the nucleus of the future united Italy. From his exile in Paris he wrote as early as September, 1855, his famous declaration: "Being convinced that before everything else we must make Italy, as this is the predominant question, the Republican party says to the House of Savoy: 'Make Italy, and we are with you, but not otherwise.'" He died before his dream was realized.

Mazzini himself as early as 1832, in a letter to the Swiss historian Sismondi, had written: "I should adapt myself to the Monarchy if . . . a king of Piedmont or of Naples, for instance, were to give us at that price a nucleus of armies and arsenals. I want independence, and therefore attach more importance to force than to liberty!" But between 1849 and 1859 he became more and more hostile to the idea of a Piedmontese Monarchical hegemony over the Italian movement, and his activities, which had been so valuable for the national cause in the past, now proved deleterious. After the fall of the Roman Republic he again went into exile, and a battle of principles between him and Cavour now broke out. Mazzini believed only in revolution by the hypothetical "people," and promoted sundry plots and risings, which tended to divide the national movement and did no good except, as a result of the brutality with which Austria and the Bourbon King repressed these attempts, by making martyrs of men who represented no real danger for the constituted order. Napoleon III., who

was afterwards to conduct a policy of great value to Italy, and who already had expressed his sympathy for her cause, was terrified by these attempts, as he feared, above all, that the Italian movement would be dominated by Mazzinian republicanism.

All the more far-sighted patriots, whether they were Monarchists or Republicans, were beginning to see that concentration round Piedmont, its King and Cavour, was a national necessity. But Cavour himself convinced Monarchist and supporter of Constitutional and diplomatic methods though he was, did not hesitate to seek, for the sake of that same national cause, the support of all those capable of promoting it. He had his first meeting with Garibaldi, who in 1848-1849 had proved not only his burning patriotism, but his great military genius, before the Paris Peace Congress on August 13th, 1856, and encouraged his audacious hopes.

Professor Volpe thus describes the state of mind in Italy between 1849 and 1859, which he compares with the situation after the World War: "There gathered round Piedmont, Cavour, and his King, coming from different quarters, the derelicts of many shipwrecks, men of the Carbonari and Masonic sects, Giobertians of the Federal idea and of the *Primato*, Mazzinians of the Republic, men who, until then, had been devoted to the Bourbons or the Grand Duke (of Tuscany), but now abandoned them to their destinies; men of different origin, different temper, different moral stature and mental calibre, but united in the sense of common danger, of weariness at the protracted disputes on the form of government and at the delay in the expectation of a super-ideal never attained, in the desire for disciplined action and for not too distant realizations, for an Italy without adjectives."¹

Cavour himself had not yet evolved a definite plan for the liberation of Italy, nor a scheme for its future governance. He aimed at strengthening Piedmont and making it the centre of the national movement, and at expelling the Austrians from the country. He had not thought out the problem of what were to be the relations of Piedmont with the other Italian States, but he succeeded in attracting to Piedmont all the most active forces in Italy having the same

¹ Gioacchino Volpe, *Fra storia e politica*.

object in view. Just as the army was full of volunteers from every part of Italy, so also there were men from every province in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, and many non-Piedmontese were in the Cabinet, so that the Turin Parliament was already, in a sense, the Parliament of Italy. Similarly, in the schools and universities there were scholars from Naples, Sicily, Tuscany, the Austrian provinces, and the Papal States. These men were regarded not as foreigners, but as unhyphenated Italians.

But Cavour realized, as Mazzini failed to do, that the national idea was as yet by no means generalized. The mass of the people did not "feel" Italy; the patriots were an *élite* of heroes, of men of superior moral value, but a minority in every province, and it was useless to expect the liberation to arise from a popular outbreak against the Austrians and the native tyrants. For the Italian cause to triumph, foreign support, diplomatic and military, was necessary.

The best hope seemed to lie in France, or, rather, in Napoleon III. The Emperor had a real sympathy for the Italian cause, partly because he was a strong believer in the principle of nationality as the necessary basis of the State. But he was, as we have seen, very much afraid of the Mazzinian Democratic party. Cavour very ably played upon these fears, and made him realize the extent of the agitation in Italy, which might, if it were not canalized into constitutional and diplomatic channels and if European diplomacy did not lend it support, easily break out into anarchy. Finally, he felt that his own position in France was far from secure, and, as Count Salmour, one of Cavour's envoys, wrote in 1857, if in two years he did not secure his position by a war which would prove popular in France, he might be deposed. The only war of such a nature was one to upset the Austrian domination in Italy.

But Napoleon had further to consider his own unpopularity with various European Governments, and the hostility of the powerful French Catholic party to a policy favourable to Italian Liberalism. The attempt on his life by Orsini, while it intensified his fears of the Italian revolutionary movement, made him even more anxious to see Italy freed from all Mazzinian influences. He enacted the

most stringent police measures, and demanded that other Powers, especially Piedmont, should act likewise. Nevertheless, his determination to do something for Italy was strengthened. At the famous Plombières interview with Cavour in 1858, held at the Emperor's own suggestion, the foundations of the Franco-Sardinian Treaty of 1859 for war against Austria were laid.

In the meanwhile the revolutionary ferment was spreading throughout Italy. The various Governments were seriously alarmed, especially after the denunciation of them at the Paris Congress. They showed a tendency to relax the severity of their police methods, and once more there was talk of reforms; but it was now too late, and while the plots and conspiracies of the Mazzinian movement were less frequent, faith in Piedmont and in King Victor Emmanuel's army increased.

Cavour was still in the phase of evolution with regard to the future of Italy. At Plombières he had been well content with the promise of French support for the expulsion of the Austrians and of Austrian influence from Italy, and the creation of a large North Italian Kingdom under Victor Emmanuel. The Pope should retain Rome and the Patriarchy of St. Peter, while the rest of his States should be united to Tuscany and form a separate Kingdom in Central Italy; and Naples would be left to the Bourbons for the present. The whole of Italy was to form a federation under the Presidency of the Pope; here was Gioberti's old federal idea reappearing, but Cavour probably felt that it would never materialize.

As a reward for his assistance in securing these results, Napoleon demanded the cession of Savoy and Nice to France, and the hand of King Victor's fifteen-year-old daughter, Princess Clothilde, for his own able but somewhat disreputable cousin, Jerome Napoleon.

The obstacles which arose after Plombières were due to the suspicions of a Franco-Sardinian anti-Austrian alliance, rumours of which transpired, and the attempts of European diplomacy to prevent war. As Sir James Hudson, British Minister at Turin, rightly observed, the agreement marked the end of the treaties of 1815, on which the European territorial and diplomatic system was founded. Other difficulties were due to Napoleon's vacillating character;

he was alarmed at the opposition aroused, afraid of the consequences and responsibilities involved, and tried to fall back at the last moment on his favourite expedient—a European Congress. But Cavour manœuvred with supreme skill and the Congress idea lapsed. Then there was the question of finding a pretext for war, but this was supplied by Austria's bungling diplomacy. By her ultimatum to Piedmont, demanding disarmament within three days, she appeared in the guise of an aggressor, and war thereupon broke out.

The course of the war justified Cavour's policy. The Sardinian army, although smaller than that of the French ally, distinguished itself in the field, and the volunteers who joined it, especially those under Garibaldi, gave it the character of an Italian national army. But the Emperor's vacillations showed themselves once more in the conduct of the campaign. He became alarmed at the reports reaching him from Paris that Prussia and other German States were preparing to attack France, that the other Great Powers were hostile, that the opposition in France was gaining strength. Above all, the sight of the battle-field of Solferino, with its thousands of dead and wounded, sickened him. He suddenly determined to make peace, without even consulting his ally King Victor Emmanuel. He met the Emperor Francis Joseph at Villafranca on July 11th, 1859, and there an armistice was concluded. The two sovereigns agreed to the creation of an Italian Confederation under the honorary Presidency of the Pope; the Emperor of Austria undertook to hand over Lombardy to the Emperor of the French, who would then cede it to the King of Sardinia, while Venetia, although remaining under the Crown of the Emperor of Austria, would form part of the Italian Confederation; the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the Duke of Modena were to re-enter their States. The Pope was to be asked to introduce reforms into his dominions, and a general amnesty was to be granted to all persons compromised in the recent occurrences.

The peace thus sketched out was profoundly unsatisfactory from the Italian point of view. King Victor Emmanuel could not, however, avoid signing it, but he added the significant words, "*Pour ce que me concerne,*" which meant that he undertook no obligations for the

clauses regarding the rest of Italy outside his own dominions. Cavour was beside himself with anger at what he regarded as treachery on Napoleon's part, and, indignant even with the King, sent in his resignation, which was accepted. Napoleon, for the time being, renounced his claims to Nice and Savoy.

Public opinion was bitterly disappointed at this outcome of a campaign which had begun so promisingly and seemed destined to lead to the complete unification of Italy. But the situation was by no means as hopeless as it appeared. The rulers of Parma, Modena, and Tuscany, and the Papal representatives in Romagna, had been expelled without bloodshed, and Provisional Governments were set up in their place. They could not re-enter their former dominions without foreign help, but the Emperors had agreed at Villafranca that no military assistance was to be given them, and everywhere annexation to Piedmont was demanded. This meant that the unity of Italy was beginning in earnest. Napoleon opposed the annexations, but feebly. The idea of a confederation was rapidly vanishing away, and Prince Jerome Napoleon, who had been sent at the head of a French army corps to Tuscany, became a convinced annexationist himself, and departed for Northern Italy. A criss-cross game of diplomacy, hesitation, and popular demands now began. The King and the new Cabinet, led by Rattazzi, were in favour of the annexations, but did not declare their policy for reasons of prudence, in order not to strengthen Napoleon's opposition. In the various provincial capitals certain aspects of particularism survived. The only point which was really certain was the impossibility of a return to the past *régimes*.

In the meanwhile Cavour, who, after his resignation had withdrawn to the Lake of Geneva and then to his own estates at Leri, was still regarded as the real leader of the national movement, and was consulted by the King, Ministers, deputies, and revolutionary leaders. He saw the impossibility for Napoleon of engaging in a new war against Italian unity, and the activities of the revolutionary groups throughout the country offered him the opportunity of creating the new Italian Kingdom, by means of the annexation movement in Central Italy and revolutionary outbreaks elsewhere.

Peace was concluded at Zürich on December 10th, 1859, and the return of the Whigs to power in England under Palmerston, who disliked Austria, favoured the Italian cause.

The Rattazzi-La Marmora Cabinet, having proved unable to cope with the situation, Cavour was sent for once more and returned to power on January 16th, 1860. He realized that Nice and Savoy must now be ceded in favour of the withdrawal of Napoleon's opposition to the annexations. Deputies from Central Italy were admitted to the Piedmontese Parliament, and the plebiscites suggested by Napoleon were held and returned overwhelming majorities in favour of annexation. The new Italy thus comprised the old Sardinian State (minus Nice and Savoy), Emilia, the Legations, and Tuscany. Venetia was still governed by Austria, the Pope held sway in the Lazio, Umbria, and the Marches, and in the South King Francis ruled over a population which was discontented but not in a revolutionary mood; a widespread insurrectionary movement in the South was, indeed, generally regarded as impossible. Garibaldi himself did not believe in it, while Cavour did not contemplate any action against the Bourbon Kingdom, unless such a movement broke out spontaneously. The Sicilian Francesco Crispi was the one man who did believe in the possibility of a revolution, and two of his friends, Rosalino Pilo and Giovanni Corrao, went to Sicily, followed soon after by Crispi himself, to spy out the land. Crispi knew that Garibaldi would not move unless he were sure of finding a general revolutionary agitation, and actually exaggerated the importance of certain minor outbreaks, as he also knew that the mere presence of Garibaldi, even with a small following, would suffice to rouse the whole island.

Garibaldi began to gather around him the men whom he might lead to Sicily, and Cavour, although obliged for diplomatic reasons to discountenance any act of aggression against the Neapolitan Kingdom, secretly lent him assistance. A Genoese shipowner supplied two steamers, and on May 5th Garibaldi sailed from Quarto, near Genoa, with a thousand followers, comprising many highly educated, high-minded men, a few foreigners, and a number of veterans of the Chief's previous campaigns, all inspired by

an almost religious enthusiasm for the national cause. The motto which Garibaldi adopted was: "Italia e Vittorio Emanuele." Whether he had abandoned his old Republicanism or not is doubtful, but his main objective was the unification of Italy, and this he knew could only be achieved through an alliance with the Monarchy.

The expedition landed at Marsala in Sicily. The oft-told story of his conquest of the island is a true epic. There were 30,000 Bourbon soldiers, and Garibaldi's Thousand at first found but few active supporters among the islanders. Nevertheless, he defeated the Royalist forces in every encounter, and such was the fame of his exploits that Palermo was evacuated by its garrison of 15,000 men, and occupied by the Thousand. Garibaldi, reinforced by many more volunteers, established his Government in the island and marched eastward towards Messina, which was defended by Bosco, the only able Bourbon commander.

The conquest of Sicily raised a new set of political problems. It was obvious that the Bourbons could no more hold out on the mainland than on the island if ever Garibaldi got across the Straits, and Garibaldi was determined to do so; he not only wished to conquer the whole Kingdom, but also to march on Rome. This would have brought about two results: one was the determined resistance of Napoleon, whom the Clerical party forced to support the Temporal Power in Rome, and the other was the danger that, when once so vast an area was occupied by the Garibaldian armies, the followers of the General might force his hand and produce a plebiscite in favour of the Republic. Then a last duel between the Monarchy and the Republic would follow, and, although the former was certain to prevail in the end, Cavour had no wish for a civil war between two sections of the national party. Napoleon actually contemplated preventing Garibaldi from crossing the Straits. But Cavour succeeded in securing Great Britain's abstention from such action, and thereby induced Napoleon to abandon it, and enabled Garibaldi to cross the Straits. Garibaldi easily overcame the resistance of the Bourbon forces which opposed him, entered Naples in triumph, whence the King had withdrawn to Gaeta, and on the Volturno won a victory over a much larger Bourbon force on October 1st. His strategy had defeated the

Bourbon generals, and the whole system collapsed before him.

Cavour was determined, at all costs, to prevent a Garibaldian invasion of the Papal States, in order to avoid a conflict with France. He intended sooner or later to bring about the end of the Temporal Power, but he saw that the time was not yet ripe, except so far as concerned the outlying provinces. These, however, must be occupied by the Royal Army, and not by revolutionary forces. There was a good pretext for such action because the Papal Government had enrolled foreign mercenaries and volunteers under the French General Lamoricière, through whom alone it was able to maintain itself in those provinces. At the same time Cavour realized the necessity for hastening the annexation of the Neapolitan provinces so as to present European diplomacy with a *fait accompli* as soon as possible. This could only be achieved with a Royal Army in occupation; the Garibaldians had no legal status, and there was always the danger of action by Garibaldi's less scrupulous followers.

Thus, on September 7th, Cavour had sent Cardinal Antonelli an ultimatum demanding the immediate disbandment of Lamoricière's filibusters, who were pillaging and committing acts of violence, and followed it up with an invasion of the Marche by a Royal force. Lamoricière was defeated by Cialdini at Castelfidardo on September 18th; Ancona surrendered after a bombardment on the 29th, and the whole of the Marche and Umbria were occupied. Cavour presented a Bill to Parliament authorizing the Government to accept the annexations by Royal decree, provided they were voted by plebiscites. Garibaldi gave way, and the result of the plebiscites was overwhelmingly in favour of union.

Victor Emmanuel now took command of the army and pushed on ahead, entering the Neapolitan States on October 13th. The Bourbon troops were defeated in successive encounters, until, on November 4th, a part of the Neapolitan army crossed the Papal frontier and laid down their arms. The King and Garibaldi had met at Teano on October 26th, and on November 7th entered Naples together amid scenes of wild popular enthusiasm. Garibaldi then returned to Caprera, but enjoined on his followers to keep ready for an attack on Rome. The remnants of the

Bourbon troops took refuge with King Francis in Gaeta. The Piedmontese army laid siege to the fortress, which surrendered on February 13th, 1861, and Francis withdrew to Rome.

On February 18th, 1861, the first Italian Parliament met in Turin. The Senate proclaimed the Kingdom of Italy on February 26th, and the Chamber on March 14th. On the 17th the King placed the Royal signature on the Bill, which thus became law. For the first time since the fall of the Roman Empire, Italy was one from the Alps to Sicily. But there were still two exceptions to unity, and in the problems connected with their elimination Italy was to be deprived of the guidance of her great statesman Cavour, who did not live to see his great task completed.

With the proclamation of the Kingdom of Italy, the spiritual unity of the country was completed, although materially Rome and Venetia still remained outside the national State. Here and there a few followers of the Bourbons and other deposed dynasties survived; there were some *Austriacanti* in Lombardy and some *Papalini* in the ex-Papal provinces, but they did not represent a party and were so few and uninfluential as to be of no account. Practically everyone, even those who had been by no means active in support of the new *régime*—and they were the majority—took it for granted, as something which was now beyond discussion.

A problem demanding immediate solution was that of absorbing the various provinces of Italy and welding the people into a single nation. If, as I have said, unity was very soon taken for granted and accepted by the immense majority, that majority did not yet feel the national idea; it had not "found itself." Except for the magnificent minority of aristocrats, intellectuals, bourgeois, and a handful of working men, the rest of the population did not grasp the idea of united Italy, in the same way as the French, British, Spanish, or even Swiss peoples felt themselves to be nations. The problem was one of history, tradition, law, and administration, but was not complicated by racial or even religious difficulties. The ethnical unity of the Italian people is very real, in spite of the recent Transatlantic theories of Nordics, Mediterraneans, and Alpines,

and even though many different dialects are spoken, there is only one Italian language for the educated classes.

With the departure of Garibaldi, whose patriotic sense of national discipline made him withdraw into the shade, his lieutenants were rapidly replaced by men in whom the Government felt greater confidence, and the whole ex-Bourbon Kingdom was absorbed into the new Italian State. But if the Constitution, copied from that of England, through a bad French translation, and hastily adopted by Piedmont in 1848, did not appear altogether suitable even for the more advanced parts of the country, it was to prove far more alien to the spirit and necessities of the people in the Southern provinces.

On June 6th, 1861, the new Kingdom was stricken with an irreparable loss. Count Cavour, the great statesman whose political and diplomatic genius had guided the nation with steady hand through the dangerous years since 1849, was no more. His death came when the Kingdom was created, but at a moment when his great qualities were all the more needed to overcome the inevitable difficulties of the first critical years of nationhood. There was no figure in Italy who could be regarded as his natural successor, and although the man selected for the task by the King, Baron Bettino Ricasoli, ex-Dictator of Tuscany, was the best available, he had not the qualities of Cavour and did not command anything like the same magic prestige.

The first problem was to secure the official recognition of the new Kingdom by the Powers, and although this presented some difficulties, inasmuch as united Italy had been created on the basis of the national principle and in violation of the old dynastic theories of legitimacy, to which Austria, the German States, Russia, and even Great Britain were attached, and of the treaties of 1815, whose whole structure was now shattered, it proved the easiest of the tasks to be accomplished, and was rapidly achieved.

Far more serious was the financial problem. In many of the former States taxation was comparatively light, notably in Tuscany and Naples; but the necessities of the new Kingdom and the great public works without which it could not hope to attain the level of civilization of other great countries, and the imperative need for national defence in view of the presence of the Austrians in Venetia,

involved a very heavy increase of taxation. In order not to make the burden unbearable, recourse was had to ever-increasing loans, and the Budget remained unbalanced for twenty years, until Quintino Sella undertook the Herculean task of restoring the national finances.

The Southern question at once began to loom large, and the first outward manifestation of its gravity was brigandage. The peculiar form of brigandage which raged throughout Southern Italy between 1861 and 1865 was neither purely criminal, purely political, nor purely economic, but a combination of the three. With the annexation of the ex-Bourbon Kingdom the inefficient and ill-disciplined Neapolitan army was disbanded, but immediately afterwards the conscription law was extended to the annexed provinces, and the men who had been but recently sent to their homes with ignominy were summoned to serve in the Italian army before they had got accustomed to the notion of conscription and national service, or even to that of united Italy. There were, in consequence, large numbers of men who refused to respond to the summons, and preferred to fly to the hills and become outlaws. At the same time the general state of terrible poverty in the South and the utter lack of confidence in all authority made the profession of brigandage popular, and conferred a halo of romance on it. The exiled Bourbons, who had established their headquarters in Rome, under the ægis of the Papal Government, took advantage of the discontent in the South and of the brigandage movement to give the agitation a political Legitimist character, as if it were a reaction in favour of the deposed dynasty. While the native leaders of the movement understood its real character, a number of foreigners from Catholic countries—Frenchmen, Belgians, and Spaniards in particular—regarded it as a crusade against an atheistic *régime* and joined the insurgent bands in the South. But instead of crusaders, they found criminals who committed the most atrocious acts of cruelty. The Italian Government proceeded with the most ruthless severity against the bandits, and the soldiers exacted reprisals for the atrocities committed by them. It took four years to crush out the brigands, because they could always take refuge in the Papal States, and it was only when they extended their misdeeds to the Papal provinces that a tacit

entente was established between the authorities of the two States.

While the campaign against the brigands was being pursued Garibaldi made two more attempts to complete Italian unity by premature military expeditions. The first aimed at invading the Tirol and driving the Austrians out of Venetia, the second at occupying Rome. The Sarnico affair fizzled out innocuously; the other was more serious. Garibaldi collected some thousands of volunteers in Sicily and crossed over to Calabria; but this time the Government, then under Rattazzi, who had at first coquetted with the idea, as soon as it realized the inveterate opposition of Napoleon, took severe measures. An encounter between the Royalists and Garibaldians took place at Aspromonte on August 29th; Garibaldi himself was wounded, and, not wishing in any way to encourage civil war, surrendered. He was arrested with many of his followers and interned in the fort of Varignano, but eventually the Garibaldians were all amnestied.

The Peace of Zürich had left the Veneto still in the hands of Austria, and it seemed as if there were no hope of its coming within the Italian fold for the present. Mazzini believed in the possibility of driving out the Austrians by a popular rising, but all his plottings resulted in nothing more than trifling disturbances by armed bands in the Friuli in 1864. Napoleon was certainly unwilling to renew the war against Austria, and Italy, in her serious financial straits, had been obliged greatly to reduce her army. But the difficulties between Prussia and Austria offered the possibility of another solution. An alliance between Italy and Prussia was concluded, with the approval of Napoleon, and war broke out in June, 1866. Prussia rapidly defeated the Austrian army and those of the South German States. But the Italian army, although stronger than the Austrian, was distracted by divided counsels, and the section of it commanded by Cialdini never crossed the Po. On June 24th the second Battle of Custoza took place, with indecisive results, and, although it was not a disaster nor even a serious defeat, but merely a set-back, La Marmora withdrew beyond the Mincio. It was not until July 8th that a new advance, eventually reaching the Isonzo, was begun, while Garibaldi invaded the Trentino and secured some

successes. The Italian fleet, commanded by the hopelessly incapable Persano, was defeated, though not destroyed, at Lissa on July 20th, and on the 26th came the news of the Armistice of Nikolsburg, concluded by Prussia without informing Italy or showing any regard for her. Italy was consequently forced to recall Garibaldi from the Trentino and negotiate an armistice of her own. Napoleon had already intervened, and peace was concluded between Austria and Italy on October 3rd. The terms of the latter were profoundly unsatisfactory. The Veneto was ceded by Austria to Napoleon, who was to hand it over to Italy provided that the inhabitants agreed to the transfer. The population gave an almost unanimous vote for annexation. But it was the Veneto alone, without the rest of the Italian-speaking provinces of Austria—the Trentino, Trieste, Gorizia, Gradisca, Istria, and Dalmatia. The frontier, as then delimited, was wholly unfavourable to Italy; the Trentino constituted a powerfully fortified wedge penetrating into the very heart of the North Italian plain, and threatening some of the richest agricultural and industrial districts and the lines of communication between East and West. On the Eastern frontier Austria held the watershed and both banks of the Isonzo. East of the Adriatic the possession of the well-sheltered harbours of Istria and Dalmatia, the latter protected by a double and sometimes triple chain of rocky islands, was a formidable threat to the flat, undefended Italian coast, which had no harbours of naval value between Venice and Brindisi, and throttled Italy in the narrow sea.

Moreover, Austria remained in possession of territories inhabited by peoples of Italian tongue or of Italian civilization, and her systematic attempts to wipe out all traces of *Italianità* and to swamp the highly civilized Italian communities of the East Adriatic coast with ever-advancing waves of more primitive Slavs created a constant danger to the peace of Europe.

Nor should we forget the psychological effect of the outcome of the war of 1866. Although no irretrievable disaster had been suffered, Italy, in her first war as a united nation, had been defeated on land and sea. Her soldiers and sailors had given proof of undoubted gallantry, but the leadership had been bad, and the generals had quarrelled among them-

selves. The victories of 1859 were forgotten or attributed exclusively to French assistance, and only Custoza and Lissa remembered. Austria, above all, felt rehabilitated and could afford to despise Italy and treat her as a *quantité négligeable*. The moral humiliation of this war lasted for half a century and was only finally redeemed at Vittorio Veneto.

The Roman problem was even more difficult, because the opponent to its solution in a national sense was not an enemy, but a powerful ally, and the Democratic, Republican, and Garibaldian parties, whose inopportune enthusiasm for an immediate solution constituted a danger for the nation, had to be held in check. The Temporal Power, now limited to the city and province of Rome—the ancient Patrimony of St. Peter—was strongly upheld by foreign Catholic Powers, especially by Napoleon III., not from any religious convictions which he may have had, but because Catholic support was indispensable to him in France and could only be secured on condition that he supported the rights of the Holy See. Napoleon, therefore, maintained a French garrison in Rome to protect it from attack. Cavour had vigorously opposed any attempt on the part of the Garibaldians to invade Papal territory; if it were ever to be invaded, the operation must be carried out by the troops of His Majesty's army and not by irresponsible bands of Democratic and Republican volunteers, for international as well as national reasons. But he realized the necessity that Rome should be annexed to the Kingdom sooner or later, and, indeed, that it should be the capital of Italy, the only city which could be the capital. In a speech in the Chamber, delivered on October 11th, 1860, before even the proclamation of United Italy, he had declared Italy's aspiration to be that "the Eternal City, in which twenty-five centuries have accumulated every glory, should become the splendid capital of the Italian Kingdom. I believe that the solution of the Roman question should be arrived at through the conviction, which will grow ever stronger in modern society, that liberty is highly favourable to the development of true religious feeling. When this opinion comes to be generally accepted . . . I do not hesitate to affirm that the great majority of enlightened and sincere Catholics will recognize that the august Pontiff, who is the

head of our religion, can exercise his sublime ministry much more freely, more independently, guarded by the love and respect of 22,000,000 Italians than if defended by 25,000 bayonets." Cavour based his belief in the necessity that Rome should be the capital of Italy on moral and historic grounds, and he had expressed his conviction in the celebrated phrase "a free Church is a free State." But he insisted that the solution should be arrived at, if possible, by agreement with France and the Holy See itself, and he vigorously opposed any premature attempt to *brusquer* the question. He died before his aspiration could be realized, but his plan was never abandoned, and the Law of Papal Guarantees, enacted after the occupation of Rome in 1870, embodied most of his ideas on the subject.

As long as the Temporal Power survived, even over a small part of the nation's territory, and as long as it was supported by foreign troops, there could be no real settlement for Italy. On the other hand, as long as Napoleon continued to uphold the Temporal Power it was impossible for the young Italian Kingdom, not yet fully received into the family of European Powers and still regarded with suspicion as a centre of revolutionary activity, to attempt a solution of the problem by force, or allow the revolutionary elements to undertake such a solution, as it had done in the case of the Garibaldi expedition to Sicily. Then there was the question of the capital, with which that of the Temporal Power was closely connected. As Professor Volpe writes: "It had been an ancient intuition of the Italians, from Petrarch to Cavour, that Rome signified Italy, and that the fate of the two was bound together."¹ Rome alone was the natural and obvious capital of Italy, on account of its great Italian traditions and its geographical situation, and also because it alone could become the capital without arousing the particularist jealousies of the other cities which were or had been capitals. Turin was essentially the capital of Piedmont; but with Turin as the capital of Italy the Kingdom was merely an enlarged Piedmont and not Italy. The other ex-capitals were even more local than Turin. At the same time, the misgovernment in Rome itself and the hatred which the French garrison aroused created a state of perpetual ferment, of which the revolutionary elements,

¹ *L'Italia in cammino*, p. 22.

with Garibaldi at their head, within and without the Lazio, might at any moment take advantage, thereby giving rise to dangerous international complications. An arrangement with France for a settlement became absolutely indispensable.

But to induce the Emperor to withdraw the French garrison from Rome it was necessary to satisfy him in some way that Italy did not intend to occupy the city. As the occupation of Rome would inevitably result in its becoming the capital of Italy, Napoleon suggested that the transfer of the capital from Turin to some other city would offer a guarantee. The idea of changing the capital without going to Rome aroused a great deal of opposition; the King himself disapproved of the scheme, and even the French Ministers, more particularly Drouin de Lhuys, only agreed to the proposal with difficulty and as a great concession on their part, and Napoleon eternally vacillated. The agreement was at last concluded in September, 1864, but the Italian Ministers responsible for it, Minghetti and Visconti-Venosta, were severely blamed for their conduct, which appeared to sanction France's rights over Rome and to eliminate all hope of securing the city for Italy and of ending the Temporal Power, while the removal of the capital led to riots in Turin.

But the important point was to induce France to withdraw her garrison from Rome before the Conclave, as the death of Pius was then believed to be imminent, so as to avoid any possibility of conflict between the French troops and Italian revolutionary groups. The Cabinet fell; La Marmora succeeded, and the capital was removed to Florence. The French garrison began to evacuate Rome, and La Marmora declared that, in agreeing to the September Convention, Italy had no intention of going counter to the national aspirations nor of hampering herself by the agreement should a revolution break out in Rome.

The evacuation of Rome by the French troops was not complete until 1866, and the Papal Government was authorized by the terms of the Convention to raise an international force at its own expense for the defence of the Holy See. This force, known as the Papal Zouaves, was actually raised, but it was soon evident that it was quite inadequate for the purpose of defending the Holy See, either from

internal disturbances or menaces from outside. The Roman question continued to be a centre of agitation and disturbance, impeding any definite settlement in Italy. Bands of volunteers began to collect on the borders of Papal territory, and the French Government used vigorous language and allowed a legion for the defence of the Pope to be formed at Antibes, where it embarked for Italy. On October 22nd, 1867, a handful of Garibaldians, under the Cairoli brothers, entered Papal territory, but were attacked and dispersed by a superior French force at Villa Glori just outside Rome, and Napoleon sent the Roman garrison, then at Marseilles, 23,000 strong, back to Civitavecchia. Garibaldi now took command of the volunteers and advanced on Rome. A battle was fought at Mentana on November 3rd, where the Garibaldians were defeated and driven back on to Italian territory. Napoleon would now have agreed to the withdrawal of the French garrison from Rome but for the violent opposition of the Clerical party, while the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Rouher, declared in an insolent speech in the French Chamber that France would "never" allow Italy to occupy Rome.

The humiliations thus inflicted on Italy by France wiped out all feeling of gratitude for the past services rendered by Napoleon to the Italian cause. Mentana eliminated Solferino and Magenta; it was also the death-warrant of the Temporal Power, for the September Convention had been torn up by France herself when the Antibes Legion was formed and the French regulars landed at Civitavecchia.

When, in 1870, the war between France and Prussia broke out, Napoleon appealed to Victor Emmanuel for help. The chivalrous King would have agreed, but public opinion could not forget Mentana and was strongly opposed to intervention in favour of France. Victor Emmanuel might have, perhaps, succeeded in carrying the country with him in an interventionist policy if Napoleon had agreed to the Italian occupation of Rome. But even now the Emperor merely proposed a revival of the September Convention, and the negotiations for an Austro-Italian intervention against Prussia broke down in consequence. Napoleon had recalled the garrison from Rome, and after his first serious reverses he sent Prince Napoleon, a good friend of Italy, to Florence to implore Italian help, this time offering to with-

draw all objection to an Italian occupation of Rome. But it was too late; in the meanwhile Sédan had fallen, and on September 4th the Republic was proclaimed in France.

The King, Visconti-Venosta, and Lanza hoped to avoid violent action against Rome, believing that the question might still be settled by agreement with the Pope, while Quintino Sella and the Left demanded an immediate occupation. A final attempt at a peaceful solution was made by sending Count Ponza di San Martino on a mission to Rome on September 9th. But the Italian proposals were rejected, and while the people of all Italy demanded annexation, the new French Republic declared that it had no objection to an Italian occupation, and even Catholic Austria took the same line.

Finally, on September 11th, an Italian force under General Raffaele Cadorna,¹ accompanied by thousands of exiles, invaded Papal territory, and everywhere received an enthusiastic welcome. There was no opposition, as the Pope had decided to resist only in Rome itself, in order to oblige the Italians to force their way into the city. On September 19th it was invested and the attack began; a breach was opened between Porta Pia and Porta Salaria, and after a show of resistance a capitulation was concluded by General Cadorna and General Kanzler, the Bavarian commander of the Papal forces. The whole of Rome was surrendered to the Italians except the so-called Leonine City, which the Italian Government intended to leave to the Pope. But, owing to the disturbances which broke out in that quarter, it, too, was occupied by the Royal troops on the 21st, at the request of Cardinal Antonelli.

Thus, after 1,500 years the Temporal Power of the Papacy came to an end. The Great Powers accepted the event as an accomplished fact, and the Catholic world was not much excited. At first it seemed as though an agreement with the Papacy were imminent, and Cardinal Antonelli appeared conciliatory. But more uncompromising counsels prevailed, and the Pope issued a Bull of Excommunication against all those who were in any way responsible for what he regarded as the sacrilegious action, which practically invested the whole Italian people.

¹ Father of the late Field-Marshal Count Luigi Cadorna, the first Commander-in-Chief of the Italian Army in the World War.

The plebiscite showed an enormous majority in favour of union with Italy, and even the Leonine City, which was to have been excluded, voted in the same sense.

But there was no intention of suppressing the Papacy. Cavour's formula of "a free Church in a free State" was now to be embodied in law. The Pope, as the August Head of the religion of the Italians, but also of a Universal Church, was to remain in Rome, although deprived of all temporal jurisdiction. As he refused to come to an agreement with the Italian Kingdom, his position was defined by a unilateral law voted by the Italian Parliament and ratified by the King, but without international character. This measure, known as the Law of Papal Guarantees, was enacted on May 13th, 1871; it provided that the Pope's person was sacred and inviolable and should enjoy Royal honours and privileges; it assigned to him the possession of the Vatican and Lateran Palaces and of the villa at Castelgandolfo; it insured to him full freedom of communication and correspondence with the Catholics of the whole world, accorded full diplomatic privileges to the diplomats accredited to the Holy See, and assigned an income of 3,225,000 lire per annum to the Papacy.

Pius IX. issued a protest against the Law of Guarantees, rejected the annual allowance, and refused to hold any official intercourse with the Italian Government. He shut himself up in the Vatican, which neither he nor any of his successors have ever left: in practice he availed himself only of those provisions in the law which he regarded as favourable to his independence.

The Law of Guarantees has proved a useful compromise and has worked satisfactorily for over fifty years. Neither in the stress of the World War, nor during the Fascist Revolution, has it broken down, and if, as we shall see, the time came at last for a more complete and bilateral solution of the question, it has certainly fulfilled the expectations of its authors and of its spiritual father, Camillo di Cavour.

IV

UNITED ITALY

ITALY was now independent, united, and free, except for the Italian-speaking territories under Austria. The great dream of her patriots had come true, and an Italy based on the principle of nationality, which dominated European policy throughout the nineteenth century, had arisen, and could now take her place by the side of the other great national States which had a national tradition of many centuries.

It thus seemed as though all the chief political questions of Italy had been solved, and no one dreamed of a return to the old *régimes*. Except for a handful of "Temporalists" in Rome, the supporters of the fallen dynasties had vanished into thin air and were never heard of again.

The question of the form of Government could also be regarded as settled. Federalism had disappeared from practical politics in 1849, in spite of the short-lived attempt to revive it by Napoleon III. in 1859. Mazzini, who had long survived himself, remained a Republican to the end, and a small band of Republicans continued to exist, but counted for very little, and the last three years of Mazzini's life were embittered, not only by his deep disappointment that his dream of a united Italy should have been realized in a form other than what he had wished it, but also by his painful quarrels with the Socialists and Anarchists, who were now coming into prominence and had wrested from him any hold which he still had on the working classes. The Republican movement never enjoyed any widespread popular support, although some men of high character and attainments adhered to it, and one after another of the more prominent followers of the Mazzinian ideal rallied round the Monarchy or joined the revolutionary Anarchist groups, save for a tiny band of die-hards who seemed like survivors of a lost world. Crispi, who had been an ardent

Republican in his day and an enthusiastic supporter of Garibaldi in his most revolutionary phase, was one of the most noteworthy converts, and his is the phrase, "the Monarchy unites us, the Republic divides us."

But after the enthusiasm of the Risorgimento epic, the period of realization was accompanied by many disillusion. Before the day of unity and independence there had been a general belief that Italy was naturally a very rich country, and that only bad Governments and the evil ways of mankind prevented the nation's resources from being developed. Even a realist like Cesare Correnti had written in the middle of the nineteenth century: "Where is there another country in this world endowed with such smiling, well-navigated coast-lands, with so many ports, a land so rich in every blessing of Nature, so fertile, healthy, suitable for every form of agriculture, bearing oaks and Northern trees as well as Syrian palms and other tropical plants, enlivened by a bracing, invigorating climate, by life-giving streams, with its shores rich in fish, pastoral and wooded mountains, lovely prospects of land, water, and sky?"

Yet, when Italy had achieved nationhood, the new governing class found the country poor, undeveloped, lacking resources, backward in agriculture, her industry in an embryonic stage. The men of the Risorgimento, with very few exceptions, had never thought out the economic problem of Italy, and were content with classical and poetical reminiscences and old-time rhetoric.

The problem was one of vast magnitude. The men who had made Italy and who were now expected to rule her and develop her economically and technically, who had sacrificed everything for the national ideal, but knew little about the realities of the nation's problems, were a minority, heroic, noble-minded, intellectual, many of them with a good literary education, but out of touch with the masses, who had remained indifferent to the national cause. These men had won by their enthusiasm and unselfishness, and by the fact that their action was in conformity with the whole trend of the modern political world in Europe; but now that they were in power they felt deep disappointment at finding the reality so different from what they had expected. The old parties had lost their significance, and new ones had not yet arisen.

The greatest obstacle to the progress of Italy was, indeed, her poverty. Under modern conditions, the chief essentials of national well-being are an abundance of raw materials—coal, iron, copper, mineral oils, fibrous plants, wheat areas, etc.—and an advanced economic structure—railways, roads, the mercantile marine, properly equipped ports—and an industrious population. The two former Italy lacked, or possessed in absolutely insufficient quantities; the latter existed, but at the time of the *Risorgimento* it was quite untrained for industrial effort.

Even in purely agricultural resources Italy is much poorer than was generally supposed in the first half of the nineteenth century. If a part of her soil is very fertile, almost half of it is rocky and sterile, and other parts are of inferior fertility and difficult to cultivate, while others, again, although capable of great development, are marshy and malarious or subject to alternate droughts and floods, and requiring careful regulation by artificial means.

In the days when the population was smaller, this cultivated or cultivable area might suffice for its needs in food-stuffs, while the flocks of sheep provided the necessary wool with which to clothe it. But when, as was the case in the 'sixties, the population had risen to 25,000,000, those resources no longer sufficed even for the elementary wants of the inhabitants, and an increasing quantity of goods had to be imported from abroad. In the aggregate the fertile area of Italy was small in 1861; only 28,164,296 hectares (70,410,740 acres) were productive, and about one-quarter was devoted to cereals. The total cereal crop was 53,000,000 quintals, of which one-half was wheat, one-quarter Indian corn, and little less than 1,500,000 hectolitres of rice. Even then this production did not suffice for the needs of the population, and about 1,500,000 quintals of cereals, mostly wheat, had to be imported, the average consumption being a little over one quintal of wheat per head of population.

Agricultural methods were still very backward, although improvements had been introduced, especially in Piedmont, where Cavour had been very active in promoting them, and in Lombardy. But progress was slow and continued to lag for many reasons, of which the following are the most important:

1. The general ignorance of the mass of the population on all matters connected with agriculture.
2. The heavy taxation imposed by the necessity for building up the country, public works, national defence, etc.
3. The absorption of most of the available capital and savings of the people by loans issued by the State and local bodies for the purposes mentioned in No. 2.
4. The introduction of the new civil code abolishing primogeniture and the consequent breaking up of large estates, a system which brought about many advantages in the long run, but proved injurious to production and a handicap to agricultural progress at the time.
5. The great expansion of the vineyards, without any corresponding improvement in the manufacture of wine, and subsequently the tariff war with France, which particularly affected the Italian wine production.
6. The increasing competition of agricultural imports from overseas countries.

The whole economic structure of the nation needed building up on modern lines before a useful productive effort could be attempted. The railways were in their infancy—barely 1,758 kilometres—divided among a number of companies and of systems separated from each other by wide gaps, and very unevenly distributed, nearly half the total mileage being in Piedmont alone, while the Papal and Neapolitan provinces had hardly any lines at all. The geographical and geological formation of the country made the further extension of railways difficult. The barrier of the Alps cut Italy off from the rest of Europe, except at two points on the extreme West and the extreme East, while the Apennines formed a rocky ridge all down the length of the peninsula, separating the Eastern from the Western half, and partitioning the country into many watertight compartments.

The same obstacles hindered the construction of ordinary roads. For historical reasons, many of the minor towns and large villages were built on inaccessible eyries. In times of perpetual internecine warfare and foreign invasions, with brigandage a scourge to the countryside, the sites of towns were selected largely with a view to security and defence; the inhabitants either clustered round the castle of some powerful feudal lord, who alone could

defend them, or, if constituted into free communities, they could only defend themselves by living in fortified places, lifting to heaven, like Cortona, their diadem of towers, where robber barons and foreign armies, unprovided with modern artillery, could not reach them.

An additional reason for the choice of these sites was malaria. The plains, constantly subject to the inundations of ill-regulated rains and torrential watercourses, were prolific of disease, while the destruction of the aqueducts during the Barbarian invasions intensified the "hydic disorder." Both landlords and peasants thus found it healthier, as well as safer, to sleep on the fortified hill-tops above the miasmas, and even when the necessity of defence had ceased, that of protection against disease still survived.

There were hardly any ports fitted with modern appliances, and Italy's sea-borne trade was of small proportions, although there was an admirable seafaring population, especially in Liguria, accustomed to travel all over the world in small sailing ships. In 1862, the number of steamships was 57, with a total tonnage of 10,228—an average of some 190 tons per steamer. There were 9,836 sailing ships with a tonnage of 643,946—an average of 63 tons.

Industry was in its infancy. There was the old silk industry in Lombardy, which was prosperous, but conducted on a small scale. The cotton industry was just beginning to develop in the same area. There were a few iron-works and mechanical plants in various parts of the North, while in the South there was only the fairly prosperous textile industry round Naples and in parts of Calabria, and a few other very primitive manufactures. Italian industries, as a whole, were so unimportant that in the first statistical year-book of the kingdom we only find three or four pages devoted to the subject. In 1864, the total capital invested in limited liability companies amounted to 1,351,621,000 lire, or a little over £80,000,000. Of course, there was a good deal more capital invested in industries apart from the limited companies, but even including these the total amount was very small.

The reasons for this backward condition were, in addition to those given under Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 6 regarding agriculture, the lack of coal, for which there was then no sub-

stitute, the scarcity of iron and other minerals and raw materials, and the deficiency of industrial education.

The total foreign trade of the territories now included in the Italian Kingdom (except those annexed after the World War) amounted before the Risorgimento to 607,000,000 lire for imports, and 570,000,000 lire for exports, these figures including even the trade between the various Italian States. In 1871, the imports had increased to 964,000,000 lire, and the exports to 1,074,000,000 lire (this was the only year in Italian history in which exports exceeded imports).

To sum up, the general economic condition of the country was backward, the mass of the people very poor, the wealthy were few and none of them very wealthy, and such wealth as existed consisted mostly in land and was not available for general development of a progressive nature.

The gradual realization of these unfavourable circumstances contributed to the reaction from the easy optimism of Risorgimento days and from the rhetorical talk of Italy as the *alma parens frugum*, the "Garden of Europe," etc. Italians began to believe that their country was not merely poor, but hopelessly poor, and destined by Nature always to remain poor. The legend, fostered at home and abroad, that the Italian people were lazy and both morally and physically incapable of hard work, came to be generally accepted. Art, music, and literature, it was declared, were the only domains in which Italians could hope to excel, while the mass of the people was destined to eke out their livelihood by precarious occupations, doles and alms, and the sums expended by tourists from wealthier lands. It was inevitable, when many people came to believe in these ideas, that they should to some extent become true, if only because, owing to this belief, the means for economic development were neglected.

It was clear that the lines of political cleavage would be other than those which had existed in the preceding period. Italy found herself endowed with a Constitution evolved in England as the result of and in conformity with the existence of two parties. In Italy there was nothing of the kind. There were no survivals of political feudalism, which had disappeared long before the birth of the Kingdom. There was no traditional governing class, nothing which

corresponded either to the great Whig houses or to the country gentlemen; as yet, there was not even a class of rich and enterprising manufacturers or merchant princes. Nor was there any conflict between the innovators and those who advocated a return to the past *régimes*, for no one favoured the past *régimes*.

There had been during the Risorgimento the Moderates or Monarchists and the Revolutionaries—the followers of the King and Crown and those of Garibaldi. But the conflict between them had been a conflict between those who believed that unity could be best achieved by means of the Monarchy, diplomacy, and the Piedmontese Army, and those who believed that only the revolutionary spirit and the heroism of the volunteers could achieve it. Now that question had been settled, the successors of the two parties were the Moderates of the Right and the Democrats of the Left; but they represented traditions rather than parties, each group split up into many subdivisions, and the Left merely wanted to do quickly what the Right wished to secure by degrees.

For a few years the country was ruled by men belonging to the Right, men of mildly Conservative tendencies, by no means uncompromising partisans of rigid views, anxious to build up the country, endow it with the political, administrative, and economic organizations which it lacked, and place its finances on a sound basis. Lanza, Minghetti, Visconti-Venosta, the Piedmontese financier, Quintino Sella, the Neapolitan Scialoja, were men of real eminence. But they were not equal to coping with the difficult economic situation, and very few of them had any real grasp of some of the graver problems which faced the country. As Professor Volpe writes, "that generations of Italians (and this applies to the men of the Left as to those of the Right) knew but little of the actual Italy, absorbed as they were by the idea of Italy, by the vision of Italy freed of all material contingencies."¹ Apart from the political imperfections of the statesmen, there was a great scarcity of capable and experienced administrators. The old type of Piedmontese official was excellent for the administration of a small country like the Kingdom of Sardinia, but he was narrow-minded, provincial and inelastic,

¹ *L'Italia in cammino*, p. 31.

and unable to deal with the wider problems of a great nation. Lombardy and Venetia could provide a certain number of good Austrian-trained bureaucrats, Tuscany a few easy-going, but not very go-ahead officials, while very little was to be drawn from either the Papal or Neapolitan provinces. On the other hand, there was a large class of men to be provided for whose claims to official positions were based on the services which they had rendered in the days of storm and stress. But men who had distinguished themselves as soldiers, patriots, and conspirators, who had faced prison, torture, and death for the national cause, although deserving of the highest rewards, did not always prove the best administrators in normal times.

In order to secure unity as quickly as possible, the laws of the Sardinian Kingdom were extended to the whole country *en bloc*, and also the administrative regulations; the Piedmontese system of local government, imported from France, was grafted on to the more backward regions of the South. The necessity for developing the country and raising its level of civilization involved increased taxation, although unity had not brought a corresponding increase of wealth, and international difficulties necessitated a large army and navy, and, consequently, conscription. Among the ignorant masses, who did not yet feel the national spirit, these measures aroused discontent and engendered that spirit of hostility, or, at least, indifference to the State which, combined with other economic difficulties, made patriotism a plant of slow growth, and, in subsequent times, created an atmosphere favourable to revolutionary movements. Even among the better educated and more intelligent classes, the disappointment which supervened after the realization of the Risorgimento ideals gave rise to scepticism which weakened resistance to subversive forces. The national spirit was not yet really created.

The Right has one great achievement to its credit—the balancing of the Budget and the reorganization of the national finances. This most difficult task was chiefly the work of the great financier, Quintino Sella, one of the few first-class statesmen of the post-Risorgimento epoch. It was, indeed, a remarkable success in view of the vast expenses necessitated by the wars of 1859-60 and 1866 and by the creation of Italy's outfit as a modern State. The

Right also built some 10,000 kilometres of railways, welded the various armies of ex-States into a single force, and laid the foundations for the future economic development of the country.

The Left took advantage of the discontent consequent on increased taxation to conduct a campaign against the Right in the name of a Democracy as yet more theoretical than real. Its spokesman, Agostino Depretis, advocated an extension of the suffrage, the election of the mayors and of the presidents of the provincial councils, a wider measure of free trade, obligatory and gratuitous education, lay-teaching, and various anti-Clerical measures. This programme, although it comprised many items which were eventually embodied in law, by no means answered to the urgent necessities of the time. The Minghetti Cabinet fell on March 18th, 1876, and the Left, under Depretis, now came into power and ruled Italy for the next eleven years. It comprised some men of eminence, such as Zanardelli, Nicotera, Mancini, Cairoli, and Crispi, but there was also a larger number of demagogues and adventurers in its ranks than in those of the Right. The Ministers of the Left were weaker than their predecessors; they could only carry on by compromises inspired by the opportunism of the moment rather than govern in the interests of the nation on the basis of definite political principles. The rivalries and jealousies of the various leaders of the party inspired the whole course of political development for many years. Cabinets were essentially unstable; between 1876 and 1891 there were no less than thirteen. It was impossible, in the circumstances, for the Left to carry out its "Democratic" programme in full, and the Opposition, which came from the two extremes—the Right and the Extreme Left (Radicals and Republicans)—accused the Government of not being really progressive at all, while Nicotera was charged with jobbery and subjection to Clerical influence.

The members of the Government were overwhelmed by questions of trifling importance, by pressure from all sides, by demands for favours, by intrigues for the conferring of appointments or promotions in the Civil Service. The deputies were chiefly responsible for this state of things, and came to be little more than the agents of their constituents, especially of the more influential personages in

them and of the so-called *grand elettori*—i.e., men who could control a considerable number of votes. The deputy was the slave of his constituents, the Minister the slave of the deputies.

Two men who had played parts of the first importance during the Risorgimento disappeared soon after the Left came into power. On January 9th, 1878, Victor Emmanuel II. passed away. In spite of his excommunication, he received the Sacrament and died, as Pius IX. himself said, "as a King, a Christian, and a gentleman." He was buried in the Pantheon, that great Roman temple open to the winds of heaven, near the tomb of another great Italian—Raphael—and where Italy's second King, Humbert, also sleeps. Barely a month later Pius IX. died, and was succeeded by Cardinal Pecci, as Leo XIII., elected on February 20th, 1878. On his assumption to the Papal throne he renewed Pius' protest against Italy's "usurpation" of the sovereign rights of the Papacy. Throughout his reign he proved uncompromisingly hostile to the Italian Kingdom.

Depretis, in his fifth Ministry (May, 1883, to March, 1884), initiated that system known as "*trasformismo*," whereby a certain number of members of the Right, which had but slight chance of coming into power again, were admitted into the orbit of the Left and of the Cabinet. The idea of securing the ablest men of a party out of office to strengthen the Government had, theoretically, much to recommend it, but it was carried out at the time for no other purpose than that of bolstering up the Prime Minister's own position, and this resulted in the conversion of practically the whole of Parliament into a colourless grey mass. Government was carried on by groups centring round this or that political leader, with a series of compromises, the Moderates being conciliated in one province, the Democrats in another; one set of measures would be enacted to satisfy the anti-Clericals, while they were corrected by other measures calculated to please the Church. All now called themselves Liberals, and aspired to be regarded as Democrats; no one dared to confess Conservative sentiments lest he be branded as a "reactionary." A soulless, positivist materialism, indulgently contemptuous of all ideals, including patriotism and religion, which came

to be regarded as back-numbers, gradually impregnated the whole political life of the country. Politics became more and more dissociated from national necessities, and the people at large regarded the Government as something outside themselves, as a foreign and almost hostile power, but also as a universal providence which must supply everything. There was, as was said of American political life, no "politics" in politics. The ideals of the Risorgimento seemed far away and long ago, and the last survivors of the heroic age were disappointed, disillusioned, and almost without hope. Parliament had thus already degenerated into "Parliamentarism," and in this period of moral depression, Italy appeared, not as a youthful, exuberant nation, but old, worn out and decadent.

The task, already alluded to, of welding together the various parts of the country, was carried out with a certain measure of success, except for general differences of civilization and tradition between North and South, which were destined to survive for many decades, and are not yet wholly eliminated. But, in the army, the navy, and the civil administration, all traces of the ancient political divisions disappeared. The army, recruited on a national basis of conscription, undoubtedly served as an educating and unifying force, and as recruits from one province were systematically sent to perform their military service in other provinces, it increased the knowledge among the people of the various parts of the country and created new bonds of sympathy and unity.

The Government was often blamed for its centralizing tendencies, and certain sections of public opinion advocated a greater measure of decentralization and wider local autonomy. But, useful as this would have been in certain respects, the necessity for unifying the country was more urgent, and, on the whole, it may be said that centralization, with all its drawbacks, was inevitable. *unavoidable*

The economic difficulties mentioned above could not fail to react on the social question, and it was very soon after the achievement of unity that we find the beginnings of Socialism, Anarchism, and of economic agitation among the working classes. After the creation of the Kingdom, Mazzini had tried to organize the working classes, and encouraged the creation of some of the early trade unions.

But he did not understand the real people or their needs, and while he was acting in all good faith, he soon found the ground failing under him as a result of the propaganda of the "International" and the Marxian groups.

Public opinion at first refused to believe in the possibility of social agitation in Italy. The men of the Left, especially, believed that with the disappearance of the last survivals of feudalism, the suppression of the religious orders, the establishment of the equality of all citizens before the law, the introduction of free and compulsory education, and the proclamation of many other principles of theoretic democracy, there remained nothing more for the people to demand. Pasquale Villari was the first to point out that it was just because the unjust privileges had been abolished and the people had been made free and given schools that the social question was bound to arise. He was also the first to insist on the necessity for social legislation from above, from the governing class, which was then more identified than was the case in later times with the well-to-do class; otherwise it would be forced on the nation by revolution from below.

The Governments of the Left, in spite of their profession of Democratic principles, neglected these necessities. Writing in June, 1878, Professor Villari stated that, much as one might admire the patriotism and honesty of Cairoli, then Prime Minister, one could not fail to deplore the fact that his Cabinet could think of nothing but political statics in order to balance the various groups. But it was not, as he said, the Cabinet alone which was to blame. "Our political men live in a closed circle, and if they continue thus they will end by finding themselves cut off from the country, insensible to its voice, its sufferings, its real necessities. In the meanwhile these sufferings accumulate, and when the progress of civilization provides them with the means of giving free expression to them, and it becomes impossible to crush them with violence, as was done by the past Governments, the measure will be full, and then that unexpected day might arrive in which no one now will believe."

Even in the more prosperous parts of Italy there was great poverty, and the peasantry ill-paid, ill-housed, insufficiently fed, overworked, suffered from pellagra and

other diseases of poverty and bad nourishment. "Italy," Villari wrote, "is now tired of politics and parties, who have all forgotten the conditions and true needs of our masses, who work and suffer neglect."¹

Here and there were the beginnings of trade unions as early as the 'sixties, and in 1868 there were strikes to protest against the extension of the *tassa di ricchezza mobile* to the workers, and to demand higher wages, while at the end of the year there was a widespread agitation against the milling tax. The International movement, imported from abroad, with its more brutal methods, its gross materialism, and its hatred of religion, soon gained the upper hand over the gentler, idealistic, but unpractical, propaganda of Mazzini.

These agitations began to take a more violent form, and on November 17th, 1878, less than a year after the death of Victor Emmanuel, an attempt was made on the life of his successor, Humbert, by the Anarchist Passanante. Demonstrations of joy were held throughout Italy at the King's escape, but in various places bombs were thrown among the crowd by other Anarchists and numbers of persons were killed and wounded. These outrages were the first violent manifestations of revolutionary sedition in Italy, and caused considerable consternation; they were to be followed by a less violent, although not less insidious and dangerous, Socialist propaganda aiming at the achievement of a general social upheaval, and although its methods were apparently more legal, it began from the first to instil into the masses the idea of class hatred which was to do so much harm in after years.

¹ *Lettere meridionali*, ed. 1885, pp. 309 seq.

V

FOREIGN RELATIONS

THE occupation of Rome in 1870 left Italy exposed to the hostility of the Catholic Powers, without having secured the friendship of the Protestant ones. Her foreign policy was at first dominated by her relations with two countries—France and Austria—and it is very important to try to understand those relations, on account of their bearing on the situation of later days.

Gratitude towards France for the very real services she had rendered to the Italian cause had been greatly attenuated by certain phases of French policy towards Italy. Mazzini never forgot the French siege of Rome in 1849, and the opposition of Napoleon to the annexations of Central Italy was only overcome by the cession of Nice and Savoy.

But after the fall of Napoleon, who, in spite of his vacillations, had been a real friend to the Italian cause, a new France had arisen, partly Republican and partly Clerical-Legitimist. While the Republicans and the Clericals were waging a bitter war against each other at home, both parties were for different reasons unfriendly to Italy. The Republicans were annoyed with her for not having become a Republic, and feared that the strengthening of the Monarchy in Italy would encourage Legitimism in France. The Clericals, on the other hand, could not forgive Italy for her encroachments on the prerogatives of the Holy See and the abolition of the Temporal Power; such of them as were also Legitimist regarded the Italian Monarchy as a usurper of the legitimate rights of the different branches of the Bourbons and Habsburgs. Both factions were irritated that Italy wished to conduct her own policy and not be a vassal of France, as by rights she should have been, in their opinion, because France had helped her to secure independence and freedom. Neither Republicans nor Clericals had

any compunction about interfering in Italy's internal affairs, and trying to secure influence in the country by means of this or that Italian party. Had the political education of the Italian people been the more complete and the national spirit stronger, this illicit interference would have been resented by all parties; but as it was the Radicals and Democrats who, in the first years of united Italy had been resolutely hostile to France and especially to Napoleon, were later not ashamed of accepting encouragement and assistance from the French Republic.

The French Clericals did not cease from intriguing with the Vatican, encouraging it in its anti-Italian activities, and collaborating with anti-Italian Clericals of other countries, as well as with those of Italy herself. The Vatican made no secret of its hopes that the Temporal Power might one day be restored through French armed intervention. The French Republican Government itself, even during its periodical phases of fanatical hostility to the Church in France, did not then consider anti-Clericalism as an article for export, and was glad enough to exploit Clerical influences abroad for the promotion of French political aims, one of which was to give trouble to Italy.

Since the death of Cavour, Italy had had no Minister of Foreign Affairs of the first rank, none who really understood the European political situation, and was able to take advantage of the various international movements to promote Italian interests and secure Italy's position in the world. In this there was little to choose between the Right and the Left, except that the latter, having had more opportunities of making mistakes, utilized them to the full. Successive Cabinets were so busy with Parliamentary juggling that they had no time to devote to serious foreign affairs. Thus it was that in 1876 a favourable occasion to occupy Tunisia, a territory already to a large extent colonized by Italians, only a few hours' steam from Sicily, and of great strategic importance for Italy, was allowed to pass in order to avoid offending France. In 1878 Italy attended the Berlin Congress, but whereas other Powers secured substantial advantages, Italy got nothing. Her Ministers called this result "the policy of clean hands" (*la politica delle mani nette*), but the public more accurately

defined it "the policy of empty hands." Three years later France, who had been steadily preparing for action in Tunis, while her Ministers in conversation with those of Italy explicitly denied any aggressive intentions, suddenly occupied the town and forced the Bey to accept a French protectorate. This action aroused widespread indignation throughout Italy. The Cairoli Cabinet, which had been deceived by the protestations of the French Government, fell, and there were violent demonstrations against the French, to which the outrages against Italian citizens at Marseilles were a reply.

But Italy was absolutely isolated, and found no support anywhere. Bismarck showed nothing but contempt for her, Great Britain had lost her interest in her, and Austria regarded her as a potential enemy. Public opinion was deeply depressed and humiliated by these diplomatic defeats. In 1882 another occasion presented itself for extending Italian influence, this time in Egypt. When, in consequence of the Arabi revolt, the British Government decided to intervene, it first asked Italy to co-operate in the occupation of Egypt. Crispi, the ex-Mazzinian Republican, converted to the Monarchy, realized the vast importance of the Mediterranean for Italy and warmly advocated acceptance of the British proposal. But the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mancini, rejected the offer, and Great Britain intervened alone.

The French occupation of Tunis, the dangerous isolation in which Italy found herself, and the persistent hostility of France, ended by driving Italy into the arms of Germany and Austria. Relations between Italy and the latter Power were anything but cordial. The Peace of Vienna of 1866 had left a considerable number of Italians under Austria, where, in spite of the new Constitutional *régime*, they were subjected to constant persecutions. There were in Italy groups of Irredentists who protested against Austria's treatment of her Italian subjects, but in the early days of the Kingdom they were almost exclusively Republicans, Radicals, or extreme Democrats, of whom the Government disapproved, without being able or willing to put a stop to their agitation. An attempt to come to a better understanding with Austria was made by King Humbert, when he paid an official visit to the Emperor Francis Joseph in

Vienna in October, 1881. The visit was to have been returned as a matter of course, but the Emperor refused to come to Rome out of respect for the Pope and fear of offending the powerful Austrian Clericals; this piece of international discourtesy rendered Austro-Italian relations even more precarious, as Austria obviously supported the Pope's claims to the Temporal Power.

Nevertheless, the undisguised hostility of France seemed at the time the greater danger, and Depretis came to the conclusion that an alliance with the Central Powers was necessary. He would have preferred one with Germany alone, and sent Crispi to Berlin to try to negotiate to that effect, but Bismarck was resolute in demanding that the alliance should also comprise Austria. "To secure an alliance with Berlin," he said, "you must pass through Vienna," adding that the alliance would be against France alone. Italy had therefore to apply for admission to the already existing alliance between Germany and Austria, and was from the first treated as a sort of poor relation. The moment was, in fact, an unfavourable one for Italy, after a series of diplomatic defeats and during a phase of bitter hostility with France, to say nothing of the memory of Italy's defeat by Austria in 1866. But the alliance was at the time a necessity, and did serve its purpose in guaranteeing Italy from possible French aggression and in preventing any further radical modifications to Italy's disadvantage in the Mediterranean, the Balkans, and the Ægean. In the case of Austria, it was said that Italy had concluded an alliance with her as the only alternative to a war against her.

But the alliance did not give Italy any sense of security against Austria, and even in moments when the statesmen of the two countries almost succeeded in coming to a real understanding, the actions or speeches of some fire-eating Austrian general, of an ultramontane archduke, or of a persecuting *Statthalter* or chief of police, upset the proposed settlement.

At first the Irredentist movement was, as we have seen, limited for the most part to those who during the Risorgimento had represented the popular as distinguished from the Monarchical national tendencies. It was in a sense a survival of the Risorgimento, and was often contemp-

tuously dubbed *quarantottismo*, by which was meant that medley of democratic theory, demagogic practice, romanticism, and minor poetry, which was not without its heroic side and had undoubtedly contributed to the liberation of Italy, but was now regarded as played out. Had Austria been reasonable and intelligent, Irredentism might have died down, but she was neither reasonable nor intelligent, and her rulers were only inspired by a police agent's mentality. Consequently Irredentism was always receiving fresh fuel, in spite of official discouragement on the part of the Italian Government. In 1882, the very year in which the Triple Alliance was concluded, a young Triestino, Guglielmo Oberdan, determined to commit an act such as would make that alliance impossible. He plotted to murder the Emperor of Austria on the occasion of his visit to Trieste, but his design was betrayed, he was arrested, tried, condemned, and hanged. Oberdan became a symbol of Irredentism, and the fiery Carducci defined Francis Joseph as "the Emperor of the hanged." Irredentism now began to attract others besides the Democrats, a fact which tended to impair Italy's position in the Triple Alliance.

For many years, however, Irredentism continued to interest men of Leftward tendency rather than others, especially after the French Republic had ceased to be Clerical. France came to be regarded as the paragon Republican and Democratic nation and consequently appealed to the Democratic doctrinaires of Italy, who looked towards her with greater sympathy than towards the military and reactionary Central Empires. But there was a growing body of public opinion throughout the country which was ever more exasperated by the persecution of the Italian element in Austria-Hungary. The *Dante Alighieri Society*, founded in 1889 for the diffusion of the Italian language abroad, played an important part in the intellectual life of those lands by helping to defend their Italian character and by co-operating with the efforts of the analogous *Lega nazionale* in the Irredenta itself; the *Trento e Trieste Society* did similar work in the more definitely political field. The difficulties of Italy's international position were to a great extent enhanced by the insensibility of the mass of public opinion to the importance of foreign policy and

by its failure to grasp Italy's international position as a whole. The public was normally indifferent to the course of that policy, but subject to outbursts of hysterical indignation at some peculiarly humiliating diplomatic defeat, such as the French occupation of Tunis. But the Government could never count on the support of an intelligent or well-informed public opinion. Internal dissensions and the constant changes of Ministry made it difficult for Italy to conduct a continuous foreign policy or to develop her armed forces in proportion to the growing importance of her interests and in view of the strength of her dangerous rivals in the international field, while her weakness abroad was a handicap to every form of progress at home, because there was no security against possible foreign aggression, nor even adequate means for promoting or protecting her foreign trade and the very lives of her citizens abroad. Such episodes as the lynching of Italians at New Orleans and the massacre of Aigues-Mortes by French workmen would never have been possible if Italy had been respected and feared. Italy's last European war had ended unsatisfactorily at Custoza and Lissa, and had weakened the nation's self-confidence. A considerable section of public opinion was, indeed, content that Italy should adopt an attitude of amity towards all other countries, avoid any show of sentiment, and keep out of all foreign complications at all costs; this was the attitude of more than one of her Premiers and Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

The conclusion of the Triple Alliance was hailed with satisfaction as a first diplomatic success and as guaranteeing a certain measure of security. The denunciation of the commercial treaty with France in 1887 embittered feeling between the two countries and caused Italy serious losses, especially in the agricultural South, which exported large quantities of wine to France. Germany realized Italy's economic possibilities before other countries, and the Banca Commerciale, founded under German auspices, undoubtedly promoted Italian industry, although the industries developed with German help were placed in a position of dependence towards German industry.

On the other hand, the Democratic groups were now, as we have seen, of a more Francophil tendency, and looked to France for guidance, disliking the Austro-German con-

nection because the Central Empires represented Imperial military autocracy.

We see here one of the fundamental weaknesses of Italian foreign policy before the war. While the public, as a rule, took but little interest in international affairs, such interest as it did take in them was inspired by considerations of domestic policy. Thus the Democrats were Francophil, because they had a liking for French institutions, because France was a Republic and had anti-Clerical tendencies, while the Moderates and Conservatives regarded Germany as a guarantee of Monarchical institutions and orderly government. Austria was liked by neither: she was actively disliked by the Democrats, who for a long time monopolized the Irredentist movement, while the Moderates were willing to tolerate her policy for the sake of friendship with Germany, but had no sympathy for her. But the Democrats went further in their Francophil attitude than feeling for Italian national interests or dignity should have allowed. The Italian Freemasons, who were, above all, anti-Clerical, were usually ready to accept guidance from the Grand Orient of France as the head of the Order, even when that guidance was inspired by French rather than by Italian interests, and they were more closely associated with the policy of the Left than with that of the Right, although Freemasons were to be found in all sectors of the Chamber and of the Senate.

The Clericals, by whom I mean the extreme supporters of the Pope's Temporal claims, consisted chiefly of the higher clergy in the Vatican entourage and a few Roman noble houses, a small but internationally important group. They now sided with France, now with the Central Empires, or rather with the Catholic Austria, according to whichever Power seemed to offer better promise of realizing their ideals. They regarded themselves as purely international, and this attitude placed them outside the pale of Italian national life. Although in course of time their intransigence became attenuated, and an increasing number of formerly uncompromising Clericals came tacitly to accept the existing order of things, the inheritance of the past greatly influenced the political attitude of the majority of Italians towards the Church, and thus the Clericals themselves contributed to produce that sceptical

endency towards religion and towards idealism in general which characterized Italian political life for many decades.

The general indifference to foreign policy and the failure on the part of the Italian politically minded public to grasp its importance, can be summed up in the phrase of Agostino Depretis, for eleven years Dictator of Italy: "When I see an international question on the horizon, I open my umbrella and wait till it has passed."¹ This indifference continued long after Depretis' time. As late as 1900 Signor Zanardelli, who had selected Signor Prinetti as Minister for Foreign Affairs, a man of real merit but personally unpopular in many quarters, replied to one of his supporters who had expostulated with him for this appointment: "After all, I have only given him the Foreign Office."

A reaction against indifference to foreign affairs and to the consequent feebleness of Italy's foreign policy was attempted by Francesco Crispi, one of the most remarkable political men in Italy, perhaps the man with the highest statesmanlike qualities since the passing of the great figures of the Risorgimento. A Sicilian by birth, with all the ardent temperament characteristic of the inhabitants of that island, he had begun his political career as a Democrat and Republican. Essentially a man of action, he had, as we have seen, been instrumental in persuading Garibaldi to undertake the expedition of the Thousand. Realizing the importance of unity and the weakness of Republican feeling in Italy, he had become a convert to the Monarchical idea. He remained attached to the Left for some time yet, and in the short-lived second Depretis Cabinet (December, 1877, to March, 1878) he had been Minister of the Interior. Just before he came into power he had been sent on a mission to Paris, Berlin, Vienna, and London to try to establish a more satisfactory permanent international position for Italy. In his immediate objectives he failed; but he did gain the respect and friendship of Bismarck, which was to prove useful in later years, and he learned that an alliance with Germany was only possible if Austria were also a member of it. As for compensations to Italy in the Near East in case Austria secured advantages for herself, as she was destined to do with the occupation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina, Bismarck advised Italy to seize Albania; in

¹ G. Bruccoleri, *Francesco Crispi, Ministro degli Affari Esteri*, p. 9.

London Lord Derby made the same suggestion to him. In after years Crispi often contemplated action in Albania, a country for which he had a peculiar interest—he himself was of Albanian origin—but the scheme never materialized.

In 1887 Crispi was again Minister of the Interior in Depretis' last Cabinet, and when on July 29th of that year Depretis died, Crispi succeeded as Premier, and assumed the portfolio of Foreign Affairs as well. He at once took a definite line with regard to the Eastern Question, issuing a circular in favour of Ferdinand of Coburg as Prince of Bulgaria, because his election appeared to be the expression of the popular will in that country. He was also in favour of a Balkan confederation with Constantinople as capital and the Turks driven back into Asia, and in general he supported the principle of nationality, opposing Russian ambitions to seize Constantinople, and, indeed, any form of Russian predominance and the Greek dream of reconstituting the Byzantine Empire. In his second visit to Bismarck at the end of 1887 he was able to represent Italy as a necessary member of the Triple Alliance and a valuable guarantee for peace. At the same time, while expressing the view that the existence of Austria was useful, he insisted on the necessity that she should cease from persecuting her Italian subjects, and secured Bismarck's promise to support this demand at Vienna, pointing out the harm which the ill-treatment of the Irredenti did to the Alliance and the difficulties in which it placed the Italian Government. Whether Bismarck did fulfil his promise, his action, if any, certainly bore no fruit, as Austria continued her disastrous policy of anti-Italian pinpricks.

Crispi's journey caused considerable alarm in France, where he came to be regarded as an uncompromising enemy. As a matter of fact he neglected no measure calculated to allay French fears and bring about a better understanding between the two countries, but he was inspired in his conduct of the foreign policy of his country by a higher sense of national dignity than that of most other Italian political men at that time.

The commercial treaty with France of 1881 had been denounced on December 15th, 1886, by the previous Cabinet as a result of a vote of the Italian Chamber. As soon as Crispi came into office he opened negotiations for

a new treaty, but his delegates encountered strong opposition in Paris. To show his goodwill he prorogued the existing treaty by Royal Decree, acting almost *ultra vires*. But it proved impossible to come to a satisfactory conclusion, because of an insuperable obstacle opposed by France.

"As long as you are in the Triple Alliance," one of the French delegates said to Signor Ellena of the Italian delegation, "a commercial agreement between France and Italy is impossible."¹

A series of Franco-Italian incidents took place, small in themselves, but calculated to intensify ill-feeling. The Vatican took advantage of this tension, and it was Cardinal Galimberti who inspired attacks on Italy in the French Press. At the same time France pursued her military and naval preparations with extreme vigour. The concentration of the French fleet in the Mediterranean at one moment seemed so alarming that the British Channel Fleet was sent there, too. French finance, too, waged war on Italy by "bearing" Italian bonds on the Paris Bourse; it was this action which induced Italy to have recourse to German help in order to arrest the fall of Italian *rente*, and suggested to Crispi the idea of the creation with German help of the Banca Commerciale.

Crispi's third visit to Bismarck in 1888, when he also visited Count Kalnóky at Eger, caused further irritation in France; the language of the French Press became ever more violent, and various measures enacted in Tunisia aimed obviously at the annexation of the Regency and the suppression of the Italian rights as guaranteed by the Capitulations. In these various diplomatic incidents Crispi, with the support of his Allies and of Great Britain, succeeded in inflicting diplomatic defeats on France, with the result that French military preparations were further intensified.

Crispi replied by strengthening Italy's defences. In this connection he wrote to General Bertolè-Viale, then Minister of War: "Remember that this time (if Italy and France should go to war) the honour of showing that we know how to fight will not suffice; we must win at all costs. The French have wished to create the conviction in their own

¹ Bruccoleri, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

country and in ours that I want to go to war. My adversaries in Italy lend themselves to this unworthy and unpatriotic manœuvre. No statesman can want war. I cannot desire it because we are not strong enough, and because if we were strong I should not dare to face the results of a conflict the outcome of which is never certain. I beg you to reflect on all that you are doing on your side, so that the King and the Fatherland may not have reason to regret our action."

In a statement to the Italian Ambassadors he said :

"I shall not provoke France; I shall do nothing to promote war; but we shall know how to defend ourselves against an unjust aggression."

French hostility to Italy also took the form of trying to induce the Pope to leave Rome. As soon as Crispi heard of this, he sent for Cardinal Hohenlohe, a distinguished and liberal-minded German prelate, with whom he was on terms of friendship, and informed him that, while he had no advice to give, if the Pope remained in Rome he would continue to be respected, even if war broke out, and that if he chose to leave Italy no opposition would be offered to his departure. "But," he added, "let him beware of being himself the cause of a war, and remember what it cost Pius IX. to have had recourse to foreign bayonets."

Happily war did not break out, and relations with France became less unfriendly. But the attempts to conclude more satisfactory commercial relations failed owing to the fears of the French Premier Tirard of the opposition in the French Parliament.

In 1890 there was a further alarm that France intended to annex Tunis, and Crispi definitely stated that if Italy's Allies and friends (including Great Britain among the latter) failed to ward off "this new act of spoliation," they must at least co-operate in order that Italy may obtain guarantees for the security of her territory. These guarantees were to be embodied in the Italian occupation of Tripoli as an offset to the fortifications of Biserta, which France had erected as "a pistol pointed against Sicily." Germany, Austria, and Great Britain recognized Italy's right to Tripoli if France should annex Tunis, but Ribot, the French Foreign Minister, declared that France could never agree to an Italian occupation of Tripoli unless Italy

withdrew from the Triple Alliance. To this Crispi replied that before asking Italy to abandon the Triplice, "Monsieur Ribot should place us in the condition of not needing it"—i.e., undertake to abstain from aggressive acts. The one outcome of this phase of the Franco-Italian dispute was the laying of the first foundation for Italy's future conquest of Tripoli.

An unfavourable vote of the Chamber on January 31st, 1891, brought about the fall of the Crispi Cabinet and a solution of continuity in Italy's diplomatic action. Nevertheless the di Rudini Cabinet which succeeded did not bring the Triplice to an end; the Treaty was indeed renewed in June, 1891, before it had actually lapsed. Di Rudini remained in office less than two years, and Signor Giolitti who succeeded him in 1893 brought Italy's internal, external, and economic situation to a lower level than ever before. The atrocious massacre on August 19th, 1893, of Italian workmen at Aigues-Mortes led to a series of anti-French demonstrations throughout Italy, especially against the two French Embassies in Rome, but no satisfaction was obtained by Italy.

Nevertheless French influence, French fashions, French art and literature, French thought and French political tendencies, exercised immense weight in Italy. Even in moments when feeling between the two countries was at its bitterest, everything which was done in France was carefully watched and often imitated in Italy. Political events in France had immediate repercussions east of the Alps; French anti-Clericalism and French Masonic activity were slavishly copied, and the opinions of the French Press, especially on foreign affairs, were adopted unconsciously in Italy.

If Italy's relations with France were frequently acute, they were never by any means cordial with Austria. Bismarck, on admitting Italy into the Triple Alliance, undertook to protect her against French aggression, but would not even discuss the possibility of protection against Austria. In the early Risorgimento days of his career Crispi, as a good patriot, had been a bitter opponent of Austria, but on assuming office he found the Alliance with Austria concluded and could not fail to respect it as one of the treaties which were the bases of European peace. While

taking diplomatic action to convince Austria of the extreme inopportunity of her conduct towards her Italian-speaking subjects, he was by no means lenient towards the Irredentist agitation in Italy. He keenly resented the oppression to which the people of Trieste and Trento were subjected, but felt that in the political conditions of the moment Italy's higher interests demanded an understanding with Austria, as only thus could Germany be counted on as a protection against France. But it was Austria, ruled by men stupider and more fatuous than the rulers of any other country, who made a real understanding difficult, if not impossible. Thus in 1890 the sudden suppression of the *Pro Patria*, a purely cultural association of Trieste, caused widespread indignation and not among the Radical and Republican Irredentists alone. Crispi wrote to Count Nigra, his Ambassador in Vienna: "As long as the torch of Irredentism was lit by the Radicals, I did not fear it. But this last act, which calls to memory many other similar ones which reveal the intolerance of the Austrian Government, will, I greatly fear, suffice to disturb, or at least to cool, that moderate and tranquil opinion on which the Italian Government hitherto believed that it could rely."

Nigra wrote in reply to this despatch: "There are but three alternatives for Italy in the present situation of Europe—the alliance (with Germany and Austria) with all its burdens, but with security; to bow the knee to France; or to become a large Belgium without Belgium's industries. Nor is it certain that this large Belgium might not through divisions and amputations, become a small one."

During Crispi's second Cabinet, which was formed amid the disastrous conditions, both external and internal, to which Giolitti had brought the country, there were yet more difficulties with Austria. In addition to direct Governmental persecution of the Italian element, Vienna directly encouraged the Germans of the Tirol and the Slavs east of the Adriatic to press down upon the Italians in an attempt to denationalize them. In Dalmatia, where, although the majority of the population had long been Slav, the far better educated and civilized Italian coastal fringe had intellectually dominated the whole province, the Italian character of the past was being crushed out; a similar attempt

was being made in Trieste, Gorizia-Gradisca, and Istria, and the Imperial and Royal Government neglected no measure calculated to Slavitize those lands, pumping innumerable Slav officials into them and encouraging non-official Slavs to settle there. Ill-feeling between Germany and Great Britain had resulted in a *détente* between the latter and France, while France and Russia were co-operating in an anti-Italian policy in Abyssinia, with which Italy was at war, thereby accentuating Italy's isolation. Crispi attempted by means of frequent conversation with von Bülow, the German Ambassador in Rome, to ward off the dangers of isolation, making him realize the sacrifices to which Italy had to submit for the sake of the Triple Alliance, which prevented her from coming to a satisfactory agreement with France; for France combated Italy's policy in every field, while the alliance gave Italy no corresponding advantages, as it had done while Bismarck was in power. But Germany at that time did not wish to irritate France, and preferred to sacrifice Italy.

The internal situation of Italy had continued to cause serious anxiety, and in Africa she found herself involved in a war for which she was neither materially nor morally prepared. The colonial problem and the reasons why Italy found it necessary to secure colonial possessions will be discussed in another chapter. Desultory fighting had been going on in the Eritrean or Red Sea colony since 1887, and a regular war with Abyssinia had begun in 1893. Crispi realized the necessity for Italy's prestige to hold her own in Africa, if she was ever to have that colonial dominion which was necessary for her surplus population. But his African policy encountered violent opposition on the part of all the Extreme Left (Radicals, Republicans and Socialists), and also of a large section of the Moderates, specially in Lombardy. The former were opposed to any policy of colonial expansion, partly on account of their sentiments of doctrinaire Democracy, and partly because the Socialist group was beginning to see that a policy of this kind might distract the masses from class war; the Moderates, comprising most of the Italian manufacturing class, regarded colonial enterprise simply as a useless expenditure of money which might more profitably be employed in promoting industry at home. Above all, the mass of

the people failed to grasp Italy's position as a Great Power and the necessities which such a position involved.

On March 1st, 1896, General Baratieri, commanding the Italian army in Eritrea, was defeated by an overwhelming Abyssinian force at Adua; although the enemy losses were far superior to those of the Italians (17,000 Abyssinians against 8,300 Italians and native allies), General Baldissera was on his way out with large reinforcements, and although the Abyssinian army was not in a position to maintain its cohesion for more than a few days, the impression caused in Italy was disastrous. Crispi was forced to resign and hounded to his grave as a criminal, and his successor, the Marquis di Rudinì, weakly decided to conclude a humiliating peace with the enemy. The Battle of Adua, where the Italian officers and men and their native allies had fought with the utmost gallantry, was regarded as a national disaster of the first magnitude, and its memory hung like a millstone round the neck of Italy for the next fifteen years. The nation was not keyed up to the proper pitch, and Crispi was in advance of his time. His mistake was that he did not realize to the full the lack of political and national education of the mass of his fellow-countrymen; errors in internal policy gave his enemies arguments with which to fight his whole policy. The people seemed to have completely lost their heads and all sense of dignity. There were disgraceful demonstrations against the war in many parts of the country; in some places the rails were torn up to prevent the passage of troop trains, in others women threw themselves and their children across the tracks. There were even cries of "Viva Menelik!" (the Emperor of Abyssinia) and "Via dall'Africa!"

The di Rudinì Cabinet, although composed of men of the Right, enjoyed the support of the Extreme Left and of all Crispi's enemies, and its one function was to conclude peace with Abyssinia. The Extremists even demanded the evacuation of the whole colony, but against this public opinion, in a lucid interval, rebelled; nevertheless, the peace terms accepted were unnecessarily humiliating, and a considerable part of the colony was actually evacuated.

The chief effect of this policy was to accentuate the consequences of the events of 1866 and convince Italian and foreign public opinion that Italy was incapable of con-

ducting a war, either in Europe or in colonial territories. Crispi had a definite conception of what Italy's foreign policy ought to be; his opponents and successors were unable for many years to produce anything better than tergiversation and lack of continuity, varied by a "policy of scuttle." It may be said that from 1896 until 1911 Italy had no policy at all except that of automatic renewals of the Triple Alliance, which was becoming ever more meaningless.

VI

PRE-WAR POLITICAL LIFE

THE characteristic features of the last decades of Italy's pre-war political life were the career of Giovanni Giolitti and the growth and activities of Socialism, while a third aspect, of which the first two were both causes and effects, was the rapid degeneration of Parliament and the decadence of that political spirit, rather than party, generically known as Democratic Liberalism.

The first di Rudinì Ministry had been characterized by excessive prudence in expenditure, amounting to veritable stinginess, in all the public services, with the object of balancing the budget once more. This caused a good deal of dissatisfaction, and its somewhat uncertain attitude towards the Vatican, whose policy was at that time militantly Temporalist, aroused the hostility of the anti-Clericals. Its unpopularity and Giolitti's criticisms of its financial policy led to its resignation in May, 1892, and it was to Giolitti to whom the formation of a new Cabinet was entrusted.

Giolitti had begun his career as a civil servant, and first entered Parliament in 1882. He showed considerable ability in financial and administrative matters, and was a severe critic of Magliani's financial policy. In 1889, he became Minister of the Treasury in Crispi's first Cabinet. His first appearance as Prime Minister was not very happy. He professed to be a supporter of Democracy, and declared his intention of giving Democratic principles a wider application than had been done before. But in his first tenure of office he failed to carry out these intentions. In spite of his professions of Democracy he was never anything more than an opportunist. A hardened sceptic, he had no belief in the honesty or sincerity of anyone, and was firmly convinced that every man had his price—money for this one, office for that, decorations for the other.

The elections of November, 1892, were carried out with the methods of corruption, illegal pressure, and violence which characterized all subsequent elections under Giolitti, and thus, although public opinion was by no means favourable to the Cabinet, a strong Ministerial majority was returned.

Giolitti believed that his peculiar methods of government were the best for the country, and he never scrupled to resort to illegality to secure his own Parliamentary majority, for he had no faith in the Italian people. He had no greed for money himself, being a man of simple tastes, but he often allowed his followers to commit dishonest actions, and he had a *petit bourgeois* outlook, characteristic of the small landowner and of the Piedmontese civil servant. If there was one type he really disliked it was the successful business man, for he had no sense of the importance of business.

The economic crisis was now becoming acute, and a series of disorders and outrages, partly the result of the poverty and low wages of the working classes, and partly of the exploitation of that poverty by professional agitators and revolutionists, which the feebleness of the Government and its neglect of the real needs of the people rendered more serious. There were in 1893 numerous bomb outrages against sundry buildings and individuals, agrarian troubles in parts of Sicily, where the peasants seized certain estates and proceeded to farm them on their own account, with consequent conflicts with the police and troops, accompanied by bloodshed and the formation of the revolutionary *Fasci* in the island.¹

Even graver were the financial scandals which broke out during Giolitti's *régime*. Charges of irregularities in the management of the banks of issue (which then were seven in number) had been bandied about, especially in connection with the Banca Romana, of which Bernardo Tanlongo was governor. Giolitti announced the appointment of an administrative commission to inquire into the matter, under the chairmanship of Senator Finali, President of the Corte dei Conti. The conclusions of the Finali commission were serious indeed, and revealed the disastrous conditions of

¹ The Sicilian *fasci* had no connection with those created after the war by Benito Mussolini.

the Banca Romana, its excess of fiduciary circulation, the duplication of notes to the value of 40,000,000 lire, the illicit interference and responsibility of political men and dishonest actions by high officials. Tanlongo declared that he had been obliged to advance large sums to various Prime Ministers for the needs of the Government. A committee of seven deputies was appointed by the Chamber to inquire into the responsibilities of the various political men involved in the bank scandals. The Government was accused of attempting to hinder the course of justice and of hushing up scandals in order to protect its own members and supporters. The trial of Tanlongo and other Banca Romana officials ended in an acquittal, which aroused great public indignation against both the Government and the judges, so much so that the deputy Ruggero Bonghi proposed the impeachment of Giolitti.

On November 23rd, 1893, the report of the Committee of Seven was presented to the Chamber, and it deplored the conduct of a number of Cabinet Ministers, senators, deputies, officials, freemasons of high degree, journalists, and others for their illicit relations with the banks. Giolitti, in particular, was accused of having been privy to the irregularities of the Banca Romana, and of having hushed them up, of having obliged it to lend him money for political purposes, and of nominating Tanlongo a senator as a reward. The outcry against the Cabinet from all parts of the Chamber was so violent that Giolitti presented his resignation, followed by that of his colleagues. His ignominious withdrawal was regarded as a flight, and he fell from office overwhelmed in obloquy.

The situation with which Giolitti's successor, Crispi, had to cope could hardly have been more disastrous: the bankruptcy of various banks, involving heavy losses, especially to small depositors, the Banks of Sicily and Naples in very serious condition—the manager of the former had been murdered in mysterious circumstances, suggesting a crime committed to suppress an awkward witness—Government stock standing at 90 in Rome, at 79 in Paris, the exchange at 84, and, above all, a general want of confidence on the part of the public in the Government and in Parliamentary institutions. Giolitti was not responsible for the existence of all these scandals, which were the result of

the Parliamentary customs of the time and of the widespread political decadence which had set in since the end of the Risorgimento epic; but he had undoubtedly intensified the evils of the day.

The Banca Romana scandals were the first manifestation of the chaos into which ill-digested Parliamentary institutions might lead the country, and the first evidence that Democracy was by no means equivalent to good government and efficient administration. A useful result of the irregularities which had come to light was the reorganization of the banks of issue. In 1893, the law creating the Banca d'Italia was enacted, a bank formed by the fusion of the old Banca Nazionale, the Banca Nazionale Toscana, and the Banca Toscana di Credito. It shared with the Banco di Napoli and the Banco di Sicilia alone the right to issue notes, while the Banca Romana disappeared, its place being taken by the Banco di Roma, which was not a bank of issue. Since then the Banca d'Italia has acted as the bank of the Italian Government, although it is not directly a State institution, and has fulfilled a most useful function as a regulator of the national finances. The task of restoring the financial situation, so gravely compromised during Giolitti's tenure of office, was entrusted by Crispi, the new Premier, to Baron Sidney Sonnino, Minister of Finance and *pro tempore* of the Treasury. Sonnino was now to prove himself a financier of the first order. He did away with the irregular and insincere methods of some of his predecessors, returning to Sella's system of "crystal-clear" Budgets, which subsequently became a tradition of Italian finance. He established the currency on a sound basis, and prepared the way for the balancing of the Budget and the conversion of the *rente* from a 5 per cent. to a $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest. This he achieved without new loans, but by a system of rigid economy and heavy taxation.

Serious internal disorders of an economic and political nature occurred during Crispi's *régime*, which were repressed with severity. Although Crispi was a man of far greater qualities as a statesman than Giolitti, or, indeed, any of his opponents, he, too, was not wholly free from the Parliamentary methods then obtaining, and in the orgy of scandals, denunciations, charges, and counter-charges with which the country was overwhelmed, he appears not

to have been politically too scrupulous; personally, he was absolutely honest, and he died a poor man, but among his entourage were men of doubtful morals, who took advantage of his support for their own advantage. The deputies of the Extreme Left Cavallotti and Bovio attacked him with savage violence, bringing innumerable charges against him, which served to keep the country in a constant ferment, and, supported by di Rudinì on the Right, raised the so-called "moral question." Giolitti was naturally among Crispi's bitterest traducers, and tried to reconstitute his own virginity by attacking him. A Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry pronounced in favour of legal proceedings against Giolitti for his share in the Banca Romana scandals, but in view of the war in Africa the Chamber decided definitely to bury the whole affair in the higher interests of the country.

Crispi's fall was caused, as we have seen, by the defeat of Adua; but his Parliamentary position was shaken even before that disaster, and his repressive measures against the Socialist disorders had aroused the violent hatred of the Extreme Left.

Di Rudinì came into power with a programme of peace at any price, and although his was essentially a Ministry of the Right, he at first coquetted with Democracy, even in its extreme form, and attenuated the rigours of the Crispi *régime* by amnestying many of the persons condemned for the risings in Sicily and the Lunigiana. But he had no definite policy, and after the Cabinet crisis of July, 1896, he reconstituted it on more Conservative lines. Again he renewed his advances to the Left, which he tried to conciliate also by a more friendly policy towards France. Di Rudinì's flirtations with the extremists did not prevent the development of the Socialist Party, nor the recrudescence of Anarchist outrages, including another unsuccessful attempt to murder the King.

At the election of March, 1897, in which acts of violence and other illegalities were committed, especially against Crispi's friends, the Cabinet, as usual, secured a large majority, but 100 members of the Extreme Left were returned, including 20 Socialists.

The world economic crisis was severely felt in Italy, and while proposals for improving the conditions of the people

aroused no interest among the deputies engaged in unseemly wrangles, a series of revolutionary outbreaks occurred in 1898, in many cases based on real grievances, but, as usual, ably exploited by seditious elements and encouraged by the general disgust in the more educated classes at the inefficiency of the politicians.

There were serious riots in Florence, and particularly in Milan, when the Red extremists coquetted with ultra-Clericals like Don Albertario, editor of the *Osservatore cattolico*. The Government adopted vigorous measures; in the street fighting a number of persons were killed and wounded, quantities of arrests were made, including both Socialist and Clerical leaders, and several newspapers suppressed.

These troubles led to a new crisis; Zanardelli and the other Left elements withdrew, and also Visconti-Venosta, who disapproved of the anti-Clerical measures, and eventually the formation of the Government was entrusted to General Pelloux (June 29th, 1898), an honest and upright soldier, who professed the intention of maintaining order with energy, but in such a manner as to pacify the country, and of introducing social reforms. But, as in the case of the previous Cabinet, that of Pelloux showed both Radical and reactionary tendencies and had no definite line of policy.

Amnesties were extended to political prisoners, but immediately afterwards (February, 1899) Pelloux presented a series of measures restricting the freedom of the Press, of meeting, and of association which aroused violent opposition against him. After a series of agitated vicissitudes and the adoption of violently obstructive tactics by the Extreme Left, conceived by the Socialist Enrico Ferri, Pelloux was forced to resign, and was succeeded by Senator Saracco, an old Liberal of moderately Leftward tendencies.

Saracco realized that the chief problem of the day was fiscal reform in the interests of the poorer classes, but he was incapable of formulating a practical scheme in this direction. Before he had time to set forth any definite line of policy King Humbert was murdered by an Anarchist at Monza on July 29th. The assassination had been planned at Patterson, N.J., a hotbed of international Anarchists, and the conspirators professed to wish to avenge the repressive action in Milan in 1898, for which they held the

King responsible. This atrocious crime was committed against a sovereign who, whatever his faults, was the kindest of men, and whose actions were uniformly inspired by what he sincerely believed to be the good of the country. If he had at times, especially in his last years, brought his influence to bear on the composition of the many Cabinets which succeeded each other, it was largely because the dissolution of the old parties made the selection of this or that politician less obviously the result of an indication by Parliament. Such action was, moreover, more strictly in accordance with the Constitution than the policy of later days, when all authority came to be concentrated in the Chamber of Deputies, to the detriment of that of the Crown, the Senate, and the Executive. He was undoubtedly more honest and patriotic than most of his Ministers, and he alone attempted to stem the tide of anti-militarism which ended by reducing the army and navy to the most disastrous conditions.

The murder of the King was the culmination of a long period of sedition, resulting from ill-digested Democracy and a systematic propaganda of hate. But it reacted at the time in a manner favourable to Monarchical institutions, on account of the horror it aroused and the heartfelt expressions of sorrow throughout the country to which it gave rise. A more peaceful atmosphere seemed about to prevail.

The new King, Victor Emmanuel III., showed himself no less respectful of the Constitution than his father, but more intelligent, more highly educated, and in closer touch with modern ideas.

During the early years of his reign Italian political life was a succession of short-lived Cabinets, often comprising men of ability and undoubted patriotism, but few of whom had any definite policy either at home or abroad, while the few who had such a policy were unable to carry it out on account of the unstable nature of every Government.

The defects of the Parliamentary system and of "parliamentarism" were realized by many thinkers of the post-Risorgimento period, as Rodolfo de Mattei has pointed out in a recent article.¹ As early as 1877 we find Francesco De Sanctis and Michele Torraca deploring the "infeuda-

¹ In *Educazione Fascista*, April, 1928.

tion" of the provinces to the deputies (in *Il Diritto*, July 24th and 30th, August 14th, September 10th, 1877), and even Zanardelli described the deputies as "vulgar attorneys reduced to frequenting the ante-chambers of the Ministries rather than the Chamber," in a speech to his constituents at Iseo, November 3rd, 1878. Professor Arcoleo, in his essay *Governo di gabinetto nel governo parlamentare* (Naples, 1881), pointed out the grave defects of the system, the low personal interests at the back of Parliament which weaken the Government—"the Assembly tends to regard itself as omnipotent and may, if it likes, render all government impossible"; indeed, he admitted the advantages of an extra-Parliamentary Government. "There is," he wrote, "a real public opinion which is often different from, and opposed to, that which appears through the mechanism of the majority, and which may indicate to the Head of the State the elements most capable of forming a good government." Pasquale Turriello, in his *Governo e governati in Italia*, published in 1882, in studying the causes of the divorce between the Government and the governed, asserted that the Chamber ignored national interests, the parties were devoid of real principles, the elections were the outcome of arbitrary action, and foresaw the inevitable degeneration of parties into groups and cliques. G. Mosca, in his *Teorica dei Governi*, published in 1882, delivered a vigorous onslaught on parliamentarism, which, he asserted, was based on a series of legal fictions without foundation, such as that the deputy was selected by the majority of the voters. Ruggero Bonghi, in 1884, wrote that the signs of the decay of the Parliamentary régime were visible everywhere (*Nuova Antologia*, June 1st, 1884), while twelve years later, Attilio Bruniati, in inaugurating a course of lectures at the University of Rome on Parliamentary Government, began by excusing himself for attempting a defence of it. The politicians sought a remedy for these defects within the orbit of the disease; Mosca, however, admitted that this was an impossibility, while Bonghi hoped that a solution might be found outside and in despite of the Chamber through a man of genius.

Zanardelli succeeded Saracco in February, 1901, and his Cabinet was chiefly remarkable for the fact that the ex-

Premier Giolitti made his first reappearance in office as Minister of the Interior since his disastrous fall in 1893, and it was Giolitti who organized the ingenious system on which his future majorities in Parliament and the unswerving, almost servile, devotion of the Civil Service were based. Zanardelli was a man of considerable education, but dominated by a spirit of doctrinaire Democracy, based on a combination of the principles of the July Revolution of France with those of the traditional Italian Left. His one aim was to create a great Democratic party, but, like nearly all his colleagues in the Chamber, he had no real knowledge of the conditions and needs of the people. He was, as Luigi Lodi writes, "the most expressive personality of our Parliament."¹ He failed to carry out the long-hoped-for reform of taxation, while his policy of allowing unlimited freedom to the labour organizations resulted in a series of strikes, which, if they could be excused on the grounds of the deplorably low wages and general unsatisfactory economic conditions, proved disastrous for the country as a whole, and were often accompanied by bloodshed. Sometimes there were as many as 200 strikes in a single day!

In 1903, Enrico Ferri, now editor of the Socialist *Avanti!* in order to increase the circulation and influence of his paper, excogitated the usual expedient of raising a new scandal. The victim selected, Admiral Bettolo, the Minister of Marine, was accused of many nefarious actions in his administration. Bettolo, inadequately supported by his colleagues, resigned, and the Cabinet was visibly weakening. Zanardelli's health was in a most precarious condition, and Giolitti decided to leave the sinking ship in order to prepare his own accession to the Premiership.

The death of Leo XIII. and the succession of Pius X. marked the first stage in the slow process of reconciliation with the Vatican.

On the death of Zanardelli in October, 1903, Giolitti became Premier once more, and, indeed, it may be said that from that date until March, 1914, he was the dictator of Italy, even when out of office, for it was always he who dominated Parliament. Again he adopted the policy of oscillating between the Left and the Right, of giving the

¹ Lodi, *Venticinque anni di vita parlamentare*, p. 43.

Socialists and the Red labour unions a free hand, and then resorting to repressive measures. He attempted to attract the leaders of the Extreme Left into the orbit of the Constitution and Government, and offered portfolios to the Radicals Marcora and Sacchi, and when they refused from fear of a split in the party, he tried to detach the masses from them, but without success. Ever ready to make concessions to anyone who appeared dangerous to his own power and authority, he was constantly being blackmailed and invariably gave way to threats. His programme was excellent—reduction of the taxes of the poorer classes, reorganization of the railways in view of their imminent purchase by the State, important public works of general utility, the breaking up of the large landed estates and their division into small holdings, etc. But nothing of all this had been worked out and nothing was accomplished, and his whole care was dedicated to keeping in office, or, in the intervals when nominally out of office, to dominating by political jugglery the puppet Cabinets of the day, dependent on himself. He organized his majority as an almost perfect instrument of government, which lasted for many decades, and persisted even during the war; it was not until the advent of the Fascist *régime* that its power was definitely broken. He had reduced his majority to absolute docility, and under his rule Parliament had ceased to be a deliberative Assembly.

There were two important problems with which the Giolitti Government was now faced—viz., the renewal of the commercial treaties and the taking over of the railways by the State. But the immense majority of Parliament, including the Cabinet Ministers, had only the haziest notions on the subject. Further riots, accompanied by bloodshed, broke out, and in September, 1904, a general strike was ordered over a large part of Italy, for which the pretext was a protest against these various episodes—"proletarian massacres," as they were called. But the real reason was the determination of the extreme wing of the Milan Socialists to assert itself. Giolitti for once showed energy by ordering the recall of two classes to the colours and the militarization of the railwaymen, who had also struck; but he took no action against the strikers and let the agitation peter out, which it did in a few days. The Socialist deputies decided

to demand the convocation of the Chamber and the resignation of the Cabinet, and to present a Bill prohibiting the intervention of the troops in conflicts between capital and labour. Giolitti circumvented their action by a dissolution. At the General Election of November, 1904, he secured the return of a strong majority by the usual methods, and this time the Catholics voted, the *non expedit* having been tacitly withdrawn.

Further trouble was brewing in the railway world, as the railway men, now about to become civil servants,¹ could be deprived of their right to strike; whereupon Giolitti sent in his resignation, on his usual principle of withdrawing whenever there were unpleasant difficulties to be faced and leaving his successor to clean up the mess. The railway strike was proclaimed under the new Fortis Cabinet, but it failed to be general, and when the Chamber prohibited railway strikes by law, the agitation ceased.

Fortis was an able man, but sceptical, averse from hard work, and lacking in technical knowledge. After a partial Cabinet crisis he secured the services of the Marquis di San Giuliano as Minister of Foreign Affairs, one of the very few men in the Italian Parliament who understood international politics. But the Cabinet was faced by a numerous Opposition of many shades. Sonnino's attacks on its financial policy having led to its fall, Sonnino himself succeeded. This was a defeat, not only for Fortis, but also for the *éminence grise* Giolitti. Sonnino had achieved a well-merited reputation as a financier and as a statesman of sterling honesty, deep patriotism, and considerable competence in many fields, but he was unpopular in some quarters for his rather dour manner, caustic humour, and uncompromising rigidity. He did not suffer fools gladly, and was unswerving in his severity against all who did not come up to his own very high standard of honesty. He formed a Cabinet of men whom he trusted, regardless of political party, and who were technically competent—a revolutionary innovation which, in the conditions of political life then obtaining, did not add strength to his parliamentary position.

¹ When the Government took over the railways from the three companies running them, the employees became *ipso facto* civil servants.

Sonnino's programme contained an attempt to solve the Southern question systematically by encouraging the landlords, through reductions of taxation, to improve their estates, by assuring better wages for the labourers, and by internal colonization. More strikes occurred, accompanied, as usual, by riots and bloodshed. The Socialist leader, Filippo Turati, then presented a Bill providing that whenever incidents of the kind occurred, the persons alleged to be responsible should at once be arrested and legal proceedings instituted against them. The Cabinet opposed the Bill, and the Socialist deputies then resigned *en bloc*. Beaten on a question of procedure, Sonnino resigned after 100 days of office. He had no majority on which he could count, and Giolitti, who had hatched the plot for his undoing, was sent for to compose his third Cabinet, much to the joy of all the intriguers within and without Parliament, and of all those who aspired to illicit favours and concessions, including men of the Extreme Left. He took over from Sonnino the proposals for Southern Italy, and, finding himself with the scheme for the conversion of the *rente* from 5 per cent. to $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. ready to hand, the operation prepared by Luzzatti under Sonnino's Premiership was successfully carried out. This was possible because the general economic and financial situation of the country had been steadily improving, in spite of the chaos of political life.

Giolitti continued his policy of utilizing any and every element which might be of use to him in governing the country. He granted extensive favours to the co-operative movement, which, largely supported and propagated by the Socialists, served to provide the party leaders with well-paid jobs and the party itself with ample funds. He also accepted and even sought the support of the Clericals, who, while professing to regard the King as a usurper, voted for the Monarchist candidates, and he made the authorities take part in religious ceremonies.

While Giolitti's foreign and military policy, when he thought of such things, aimed only at strengthening the Triple Alliance, Fortis, awaking from his long silence, made a remarkable speech in the Chamber, saying that, "Now there is only one Power of which we must beware, and it is an ally." These words gave expression to the

feeling of hatred against Austria, which was very general in the country, but less keenly felt in Parliament.

The disastrous earthquake at Reggio and Messina occurred on December 28th, 1908, and although the whole country came to the assistance of the victims, there were not a few who attempted to make political capital out of it. It also afforded evidence of the imperfect manner in which the State machine worked.

In February, Giolitti decided on a dissolution, and the elections held in March, 1909, returned the usual large Giolittian majority. Another awkward problem now presented itself for solution—the renewal of the conventions with the steamship companies conducting subsidized services. The opposition to the Government's Bill and the strictures passed on it by Sonnino induced Giolitti to resign as the best way out of the difficulty. Again Sonnino remained in office only for a hundred days, and was forced to resign on March 31st, 1910, as a result of the attacks by the Giolittians on his own steamship Bill. This time Giolitti refused to return to power himself, and indicated Luzzatti, a member of the late Cabinet, for the succession. Luzzatti accomplished the task, but it was obvious that he was to rule only at Giolitti's good pleasure.

Luigi Luzzatti was a man of great economic culture and of considerable practical experience of business organization; the co-operative movement, the real one, not the bogus one concocted by the Socialists, was his work. He also had a good literary education and was a writer of distinction. He had been in office more than once, but he had not a real political mind, nor a grasp of Parliamentary politics. He had various schemes of reform on hand, one of them concerning the Senate, which was to be on a partly elective basis, another for an extension of the suffrage, but neither of these schemes did he succeed in carrying through. He managed to pilot a Bill for the steamship conventions, but it was only a temporary measure adjourning the real problem, and he also secured the passage of a useful Bill for the reform of elementary education. Another measure which he enacted was the appropriation of ten million lire for creating an air fleet. His policy towards the extremists, who were becoming more and more truculent, was one of absolute submission. During his Premiership

the astounding Campanozzi episode took place. A large part of the civil servants had been won over to Socialism because they discovered that only by threats of political agitation could any improvement in their lot be secured—successive Governments refused to increase salaries when demanded by constitutional means, but granted them when the employees struck work. Campanozzi, a post office clerk who had organized the Socialist movement among his own colleagues and systematically neglected his work, had been dismissed. He was immediately elected deputy for the 1st division of Rome.

In March, 1911, the debate on the extension of the suffrage began. This was the moment chosen by Giolitti to bring about the fall of Luzzatti. He said that what was wanted was not a mere extension of the franchise, but universal suffrage, and also proposed a State monopoly of the life insurance business, measures of a Radical character of which even the Extreme Left had not dreamed. The Radical group expressed its disapproval of the Cabinet, and the Radical Ministers thereupon resigned; this involved the resignation of the whole Cabinet. The real cause of its fall was that the Chamber—and that meant Parliament as a whole, as the Senate did not count—was unable to function save under the direct rule of Giolitti.

Giolitti now returned to power, and held office for the next three years, during which momentous changes in Italy's political life took place or were in preparation.

VII

THE BEGINNINGS OF A NEW SPIRIT

It was the gradual realization by an increasing part of public opinion of the importance of foreign affairs and of their close connection with the internal situation, the understanding that a feeble and incompetent foreign policy must inevitably hold Italy back in the progress of civilization, and that the disastrous state of internal political life made a virile and intelligent foreign policy impossible, which first roused at least a section of public opinion to a new spirit in public affairs.

For decades Italy had oscillated between France and the Triple Alliance, but if in the first thirty or forty years of Italian unity the two schools of foreign policy had corresponded to and acted in harmony with two tendencies of domestic politics, a new conception of foreign policy now began to arise among the younger generation of Italians.

As long as Europe was divided into two camps—the Triple Alliance on the one hand, the Franco-Russian on the other—Italy's position, as she had thrown in her lot with the former, was clear. But when in the late 'nineties there were hints at a Franco-British agreement, based on the common hostility to Germany, even the statesmen of Italy realized that, as a good understanding with Britain was essential for Italy, she could not blindly follow her two predominant partners. Gradually a friendlier feeling between Italy and France began to grow up, as a result of the policy of Delcassé in France and of Visconti-Venosta and Prinetti in Italy. In 1898 a new Franco-Italian commercial treaty was concluded; in 1900 the Italian fleet visited Toulon, and France admitted that Tripolitania and Cyrenaica were outside her sphere of interests, while Italy made a similar declaration with regard to Morocco; in 1902 these declarations were reasserted even more explicitly, and Italy

assured France that she would remain neutral if France were attacked or even were forced to declare war to safeguard her honour and her interests. It is true that in June, 1902, the Triple Alliance had been renewed, but its spirit was changed. The German Ambassador, de Monts, wrote to von Bülow on December 15, 1903, that the new generation of Italians were Irredentists; for them patriotism and Irredentism were the same thing. Even the King *irredentistisch denkt*.¹

The reason for this revival of Irredentism and for its extension to other classes and other political groups than the Democrats and doctrinaires of the Left was that Austria, no longer content with persecuting the Italians by police measures, was systematically trying to stamp out the Italian character of the Italian territories. Moreover, the Socialist movement, which in Trieste was acquiring importance, by its anti-national character played the game of the Austrian Government, and by its anti-bourgeois attitude, the middle classes being Italian, played the game of the Slavs. Trieste and Trento were regarded as indispensable outlets for Germanism in its southern march. As early as 1870 the so-called "International" Socialist Bebel, ever ready to act as the agent of reactionary Prussia and of the militarist Kaiser, warned the Italian Socialists not to dream of Trieste and Trento, as the Democrats and the House of Savoy bade them do. "Trieste, like Trento, forms part of Germany, and *we* shall never consent to a cession which would cut Germany off from the Mediterranean."²

In the Trentino the Germanic pressure was ceaseless, and every form of German activity, even if its origins were from north of Kufstein, was encouraged, German colonies were planted in the purely Italian districts, and the mixed districts were Germanized. The clergy, always docile to the Imperial Government, was utilized in an anti-Italian sense both in the Trentino and the Venezia Giulia, Monsignor Endrici, Prince Bishop of Trento, holding out almost alone. The Catholic party, which took a hold over the very devoutly Catholic peasantry, was strongly Austrophil. The Socialists, on the other hand, were, at Trento, more Italian

¹ *Die grosse Politik der europäischen Kabinette*, vol. xviii., part II., p. 634.

² Volpe, *L'Italia in cammino*, p. 126.

in feeling, and many who called themselves Socialists were Italian patriots first. Among these was Cesare Battisti, who was afterwards to join the Italian Army in the World War, and, when taken prisoner by the Austrians, to be hanged as a traitor in the Castello del Buon Consiglio. It is interesting to remember that one member of the staff of a Socialist paper in Trento was an obscure journalist from Italy, afterwards expelled from Austria for his Italian sentiments, named Benito Mussolini.

Not content with this, German organizations carried on an active propaganda as far South as the Italian part of the Lake of Garda, arousing the ire of such Italians as took an intelligent interest in foreign affairs; Luigi Federzoni, then a struggling journalist, subsequently a Cabinet Minister, wrote his famous *Lettere dal Gardasee* to arouse public opinion to the danger. The Germans claimed the Sette Comuni and the Tredici Comuni as German territories artificially Italianized, and talked of Verona as the "Bern" of Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths.

In certain Democratic circles there was a tendency to regard all that was objectionable in Austria as inspired by Germany or by the German element, and to believe that if these influences were eliminated Italians and Slavs could come to an understanding. These were the views of Leonida Bissolati, a Socialist of Reformist or moderate tendencies, and even some other Socialists, who in general followed the lead of their German teachers, began to regard France with less hostility.

Anti-Italian hatred found its most calculating and uncompromising exponent in General Konrad von Hötzen-dorff, who was persistently demanding that Austria should attack Italy at the opportune moment, which he declared was the year 1906 or 1907, and although his scheme was rejected by the Emperor and by Aerenthal as inopportune, and although its details were unknown to the public, it was not difficult to see that the hostility of the Dual Monarchy was becoming every day a greater danger. The Italian Government was extremely prudent in its attitude, and General Asinari di Bernezzo was placed on the retired list in 1909 for having at a military ceremony at Brescia alluded to the brothers in the East who were waiting, whereas Austrian generals or officials were never punished for far more

truculent expressions of hostility or even open threats against Italy.

In 1909 Austria proclaimed the annexation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina, and, in spite of Signor Tittoni's optimistic speech at Carate, Italy got no compensation for this breach of the balance of power in the Balkans. The episode caused a profound sense of humiliation throughout the country and contributed to arouse public opinion to the necessity of placing Italy's international position on a more solid basis.

At the same time there began to be among the younger Democratic element a certain disappointment at the inadequate results obtained by Socialism. Among the young intellectuals of Italy at the beginning of the century Socialism had secured many recruits, for the reasons already stated. But now it was seen that, while Socialism had failed to realize its promises in Italy, there seemed less and less chance of international solidarity based on common Socialistic ideals, as the Socialism of most other countries was becoming ever more Nationalist, in labour matters especially. Moreover, Socialism in Italy had lost the greater part of its idealism and had degenerated into a bourgeois party, led by middle-class lawyers and professors, and inspired by a grossly materialistic outlook. Nor was it any longer a single party; there was not one Socialism, but many, ranging from the moderate Bissolati, who led what would have been called the Right wing, if the word Right did not sound indecent to all Socialist ears, to the extreme Communists. On the flank was Gaetano Salvemini, ever quarrelling with everybody, talking about the wrongs of the South Italian peasants, who really did need someone to advocate their cause, but found in the cantankerous professor a man chiefly inspired by spite against everyone, rather than an advocate of practical reforms.

Many new movements and tendencies were beginning to simmer, for the country felt an unspoken longing to emerge from its slough of despond, but knew not where salvation lay. Sport had come to play an important and valuable part in the life of young Italy. The Touring Club, destined to develop into one of the most successful and efficient organizations in Italy, the Alpine Club, with its affiliated "Sucai,"¹

¹ The name stands for "Sezione universitaria Club alpino italiano."

or students' section, the innumerable football clubs, and the *Sursum Corda*, etc., all helped to revive the love of sport among a people who had not formerly excelled in this field, but had almost abandoned it in the welter of useless political squabbles.

Various literary movements with a political tinge also influenced the new generation. The *Leonardo*, which first appeared in 1903, and the *Regno* (1904), the *Tricolore*, the *Grande Italia*, then began to give expression to them. Enrico Corradini, founder and editor of the *Regno*, was undoubtedly the pioneer of this movement, and in his fine novel *La Patria-lontana*, under the impression made on him by the masses of Italians settled in foreign lands under foreign governments, but not oblivious to their Italian origins, he formulated the new Italian patriotism. Alfredo Oriani, in his *Rivolta ideale*—the revolt against radical materialism—and other writings, advocated the same ideals. Luigi Federzoni, after his battle for the *italianità* of Lake Garda, Gualtiero Castellini, and many other young men, full of enthusiasm, were attracted by these movements. It was felt that Italy could no longer afford to ignore international problems, nor consider them from a purely sentimental point of view, inspired by sympathies and antipathies for this or that form of government. The Irredentist question, the problem of Italy's frontiers, Italian emigration, the situation of the Italians in Tunisia—all awaited solution.

Another group led by Giovanni Papini and Giuseppe Prezzolini, brilliant writers in *L'Unità* and *La Voce*, although inspired by the desire to elevate the national spirit of Italy, thought that it was more important to effect internal reforms, eliminate malaria and illiteracy, and break the sway of intriguing local politicians before dealing with foreign affairs. Both groups tended to the same end—that of making the Italian people greater and better and more prosperous—but by different routes.

Above all, these young men felt that the question of expansion must be faced fairly and equally. It was no use trying to solve it by allowing, and, indeed, encouraging, hundreds of thousands of Italy's best and most vigorous sons to emigrate to foreign lands and serve foreign taskmasters, and, if deemed worthy, eventually be admitted to

the privilege of foreign citizenship, while only the flotsam and jetsam returned home. It was a defeatist solution, a confession of impotence. Moreover, as long as Italy was weak and despised, even her emigrant sons would be unable to secure common justice, but would be treated as contractors' fodder.¹ The Austrian menace must be eliminated, or at least guarded against on the North-East, Italy avoid being strangled in the Adriatic, and the French menace warded off in the West. Italy, with her extensive coastline, wholly washed by the Mediterranean, must be able to affirm herself and expand in the sea, and her ships and goods must have free access to the lands beyond Suez and Gibraltar.

It was a new patriotism, not the old one based solely on Risorgimento memories, but something deeper and more actual, which must penetrate into all classes of the population. The ideals of the nation might at times be in contrast with those of Democracy and with the "immortal principles." What if they were? So much the worse for Democracy and the immortal principles. To the Socialist whine about the Italian proletariat in conflict with the Italian capitalist class, Corradini and his friends opposed the idea of the whole of Italy as a proletarian nation in conflict with the capitalist nations. Italy must be really one, not only politically, but socially; all classes must co-operate for the common good, for the progress of the whole nation. This, as we shall see, was to become the basis of the Fascist Corporative State.

In December, 1910, a Nationalist Congress was held in Florence. Corradini was its chief inspirer; he was supported by Federzoni, Forges-Davanzati, Maurizio Maraviglia, Castellini, Coppola, and others, mostly men of letters and journalists, poor, without influence, but filled with a burning patriotism, a determination to raise Italy from the mud into which ignorant, conscienceless, and dishonest politicians had cast her; the Congress voiced the unspoken feelings of all that was best and most sincere in Italy. The Nationalist Association was then formed, and on March 1st, 1911, the first number of its weekly organ, *L'Idea nazionale*, appeared. That date was selected as a reminder to the Italian people of Adua, and of the shame,

¹ For the problem of population and emigration, see *infra*, Ch. XV.

not of the defeat, which could have been easily retrieved, but of the political cowardice of Parliament and people who insisted on making peace and leaving the 8,300 dead unavenged and the gallant army reviled and insulted with impunity. As Professor Volpe wrote: "Anyone who scans even only the first year of that weekly organ will realize at once that something new was arising in Italy; that a new form of impulse was taking its place by the side of the others to give the country an orientation different from the usual one."¹

The next year the Nationalist Association became the Nationalist party. Its members turned their attention particularly to the colonial problem. Italy then only possessed two colonies, Eritrea and Somaliland, which, as we have seen, were unsuited for white settlers. The more fertile shores of North Africa were all occupied by other European Powers, except Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, then in the possession of Turkey. There were already certain Italian enterprises in those territories, and the Nationalists believed that Italy must make good there, at least, if she was not to be excluded from the whole of the Southern shore of the Mediterranean. They no doubt exaggerated the economic value of Libya, and made light of the real difficulties of the enterprise, for which the Government and country were not yet prepared, while the anti-Nationalists exaggerated the sterility of the territory. But the Nationalists had the merit of supplying the public with a concrete object to distract it from the unseemly squabbles of politicians and from the eternal theme of class hatred. Also they realized the necessity for Italy to assert her international position; it was no use having a free hand in Tripoli if she did not use it; there was always the risk that some other Power might step in.

The Socialists were naturally hostile to the North African scheme. Professor Salvemini combated it, accusing those who favoured it of being corrupt swindlers, in the pay of army contractors. The Radicals and Freemasons, who had hated Crispi, largely on account of his colonial policy, also opposed it, partly because the Banco di Roma, which was interested in various Libyan commercial undertakings, was in Catholic hands. The Freemasons were also more solicitous of the friendship of the Turkish lodges, which

¹ *L'Italia in cammino*, p. 156.

dominated the Young Turkish party and the C.U.P., than of any colonial policy, however advantageous for Italy it might prove.

Giolitti had again come into power on the fall of Luzzatti in the spring of 1911. His chief preoccupation, then as ever, was the consolidation of the Ministerial majority. But a far more serious question was now forced on him. Germany, trying to make up for her diplomatic defeat at Algeiras and affirm her right to expansion in North Africa, sent the *Panther* to Agadir, thereby causing serious agitation in France, who had no wish to see the Germans established in Morocco. Great Britain formally declared that she would stand by France, and Germany at once showed herself ready to withdraw her challenge and to negotiate. To negotiate meant giving up all claims to Morocco, in exchange for a free hand elsewhere. But where? Italy began to feel anxious lest Germany should cast covetous eyes on Tripoli. Great Britain and France had, it is true, recognized Italy's right of option on that area, but if she hesitated too long to make good her claim, might not those two Powers, although no doubt they preferred Italy to Germany in Tripoli, be forced, if she showed herself incapable of taking a radical decision and seizing her opportunity, to make of it the object of a bargain with Germany? This was realized by the Nationalists, by many others who, without calling themselves Nationalists, sympathized with their opinions, and also by the Marquis di San Giuliano himself, who repeatedly called the Premier's attention to the danger of losing this last chance of expansion in the Mediterranean and of having another great military and naval Power opposite Southern Italy.

Giolitti at first was opposed to any policy of adventure. He was so absorbed in his Parliamentary alchemy, in the fascinating sport of wheedling the Socialists and of juggling with majorities, that any international complication appeared to him in the light of an untoward intrusion, in fact, a nuisance. But he began to see that, strong as was his majority, many of its members had Nationalist leanings, that public opinion was at last opening its eyes to the importance of a more active foreign policy, and that a new diplomatic disaster, such as a German occupation of Tripoli would be, might well raise such a storm as would

sweep him from office. The Socialists alone were definitely hostile, although, when it came to the point, some of them, notably Bissolati and Bonomi, refused to conform with the attitude of the majority and broke away from the party, forming the Reformist-Socialist group, as distinguished from the "Official" Socialist party. But the Socialist attempt at opposition and at the promotion of a general strike found no response with the masses, and the demonstrations organized against the Libyan policy fell flat. Turkey herself provided innumerable motives for a vigorous Italian action by her systematic obstruction to all Italian activities and her ill-treatment of Italian citizens. Giolitti was at last persuaded that the time for action had come, and authorized the speeding up of the country's military and naval preparations. On October 28th war was declared.

The campaign lasted over a year. The troops and regimental officers proved excellent, and some military successes were achieved, but the higher command was inadequate. The Government failed to realize that war was war and not an electioneering manoeuvre or an agricultural strike in Romagna, and it did not invest its war policy with the necessary driving-power. The people at home waxed enthusiastic on the conduct of the troops and exaggerated the importance of the various engagements, but felt indignant at the Olympic serenity of the Government and its general slackness, especially in the face of the assistance given to the enemy by certain foreign Powers. Austria placed a veto on the extension of Italian action in the Balkans; France showed keen jealousy of Italy for acting at all, and the episode of the *Carthage* and the *Manouba*, although eventually settled at The Hague, did not contribute to improve Franco-Italian relations. In the spring of 1912 Italy occupied a number of Turkish islands in the *Ægean*—viz., the Dodecanesse and Rhodes.

The country as a whole vigorously supported the Government, which, however, proved unworthy of the general support it received and of the gallantry of the troops in the field. At last, in October, 1912, just as the Balkan War was breaking out, peace was concluded at Ouchy on not very satisfactory terms. Italy's sovereignty over Libya, proclaimed in the previous November, was

recognized, the Sultan retaining his spiritual authority over the lost vilayet; Italy was to remain in occupation of the islands until Turkey should have fulfilled all the conditions of the peace; notably she was to recall the officers sent to assist such of the Arabs as still resisted, and abstain from sending arms to the latter. As Turkey failed to do so, Italy was still in occupation of the islands when the World War broke out.

As soon as the Libyan War was over, Giolitti could return to his favourite Parliamentary game undisturbed, and proceeded to prepare his electoral reform based on universal suffrage. There was in the country no demand for such a measure, and the Chamber itself was not too desirous to see it introduced, as any new system meant a risk of non re-election for those then sitting. Parliamentary life was becoming ever more divorced from the life of the country, and the various parties had lost all significance. The Socialists, as we have seen, had also split into two rival sections; the Republicans were but a shadow party, and they, too, were divided; the Radicals had a programme which meant nothing at all, while the rest of the Chamber, calling itself Liberal or Democratic, without a definite policy, was divided up into innumerable personal groups. A new party was now making its first appearance—the Catholics. The Vatican, while still officially refusing to recognize the Italian Government in Rome, had withdrawn the *Non-expedit*, thereby allowing Catholics to vote and to stand for Parliament. Giolitti was not slow to realize the importance of this fact, and, as the Catholics could not yet constitute a regularly organized party, it was important to secure their votes. Hence the famous *patto Gentilomi*, the agreement concluded between the Cabinet and Count Gentilomi acting on behalf of the Catholics, whereby the latter agreed to support all Government candidates who undertook not to vote certain measures obnoxious to the Church, such as the introduction of divorce, while the Government promised its support to those candidates who were to become, not Catholic deputies, but Catholics who happened to be deputies—a subtle and truly ecclesiastical distinction. At the same time Giolitti extended his protection in other constituencies not covered by the pact to Radicals, Freemasons, and even Reformist-Socialists,

whose leader, Bissolati, had actually presented a Bill for abolishing all religious education. Against those candidates who were uncompromising opponents every form of trickery, swindle, and violence was employed. "With this guiding principle," as Signor Luigi Lodi writes, "was initiated the carrying out of a reform intended to regenerate the nation."¹ These facts alone are sufficient to answer Giolitti's boast (recently reasserted, strangely enough, by Benedetto Croce) that he has always supported Democratic principles.

At the elections Giolitti secured an imposing majority, but the Opposition was extremely bitter and violent, and his attempts to wheedle the Socialists failed completely. There was also in the Chamber a tiny group of five Nationalists, of whom Luigi Federzoni was the leader, which was destined to make history, for in it was the first germ of the Fascist movement of the post-war period. While they fought the Socialists, Republicans, Freemasons, and all the anti-patriotic parties tooth and nail with a vigour and a spirit of disinterestedness which were startling innovations in Italian political life, they by no means supported the Government unconditionally, and they were just as trenchant and far more sincere than the Socialists in their denunciations of its chicanery, corruption, and soulless disregard for the interests of the country.

Giolitti did not feel happy over his position, and was on the lookout for a pretext to withdraw, with the intention, as usual, of returning to office when the Chamber was nearing the end of its time and could be more easily dominated through the fear of another general election conducted under Giolittian auspices. He found one in the withdrawal from the Government majority of the Radicals, who, partly on account of their remaining fragments of political principles, but chiefly from personal ambition, felt they could no longer support Giolitti. The Prime Minister thereupon resigned, suggesting as his successor, or, as he thought, as his temporary *locum tenens*, Antonio Salandra.

Salandra was and is undoubtedly one of the best of the old school of Italian political men. He had been in office more than once, was an eminent scholar and jurist, pro-

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 162.

fessor of law at the University of Rome, and a writer of distinction. In politics he belonged to the Right, and had been in Sonnino's two Ministries, and, in spite of the degeneration of Parliamentary customs in the past forty years, he believed that the Liberal party was still a reality. But he was no party politician and took a wide view of the meaning of "Liberalism" and "Right," and was determined to compose a Cabinet of as good men as possible. He retained San Giuliano at the Foreign Office, for his wide experience of international affairs, and for the other portfolios selected as his colleagues Signori Daneo, Ricci, Senator Cavasola, the eminent man of letters Ferdinando Martini, Rava for Finance, and Rubini for the Treasury. There were difficulties for the choice of a Minister of War, for the army had been left in a most perilous condition by Signor Giolitti, who, in order to avoid asking Parliament for adequate funds to make good the wastage of the Libyan War, had evolved a system of shop-window dressing as ingenious as it was disingenuous, and succeeded in camouflaging the absence of proper equipment and supplies. General Porro, realizing that in the present state of Europe—the Balkan Wars were only just ended, and other ominous clouds hovered on the horizon—the restoration of the army's efficiency was indispensable, accepted on condition that 800,000,000 lire were placed at his disposal as an extraordinary fund. The amount demanded horrified the Treasury Minister Rubini, and Porro refused. General Grandi was selected instead, and he succeeded with difficulty in securing a grant of 200,000,000 lire. The public and Parliament did not fully realize the serious conditions of Europe nor the new menace of Austria, who was arming to the teeth for a Balkan war and had renewed her policy of pin-pricks against the Italians at Trieste, while in Albania a conflict of interests between the Dual Monarchy and Italy was beginning once more.

But Salandra's first anxieties were of an internal nature. In June, 1914, on a trifling pretext, serious disorders broke out at Ancona and assumed at once an Anarchist and revolutionary character. They spread rapidly throughout the Marche and Romagna, and there were general strikes in all the chief cities, where the mob ruled supreme, and

the railway service was suspended over a large part of the country. One of the leaders of the agitation was Benito Mussolini, an active propagandist of the syndicalist labour movement and editor of the Socialist organ *Avanti!* In various towns local "republics" were set up.

The disorders, which were of an exclusively political nature, were quelled after about a week. The Government did not show as much energy as might have been expected and as the country, exasperated at these perpetual disorders, was beginning to demand. But Signor Salandra's Parliamentary position was very precarious, and even the extremely mild measures with which he handled the situation called upon his head the vials of the wrath of the Socialists and other opponents. The Chamber, it should be remembered, was a Giolittian one, and inspired by the Man of Dronero,¹ who, with a shake of his finger, could upset any Cabinet not to his liking. The Red Week, as it was called, had one effect destined to lead to important consequences, although no one realized it at the time. Mussolini was so disgusted at the cowardice and incompetence of the other leaders of the outbreak that he began from that moment to lose interest in the revolutionary movement and to break away from the party organization.

The railwaymen now threatened a general railway strike if the ringleaders and others who had participated in the June rebellion were punished. But this time Salandra showed energy and recalled two classes of reservists to the colours, an action which prevented the railway strike from materializing. The country began to settle down to normal conditions after the recent shocks, when the murder of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his wife at Serajevo on June 28th set the whole of Europe in a turmoil, the outcome of which was to be war.

¹ One of the many sobriquets by which Giolitti was known, Dronero being his constituency.

VIII

ITALY AND THE WORLD WAR

NOWHERE did the outbreak of the crisis of July, 1914, cause more astonishment and consternation than in Italy. For decades the public had been led to believe in the utter impossibility of a great European war, especially of one in which Italy might be involved. The first impression was of unrelieved horror, and the general feeling was that every effort must be made to prevent war from breaking out, and that if it should break out Italy must at all costs be kept out of the conflict. Italy was a member of the Triple Alliance, but the very thought of intervening on behalf of Austria, Italy's hereditary enemy and the oppressor of the unredeemed Italians, in a quarrel provoked by Austria herself to assert her own predominance in the Balkans, and by Germany, who, after brow-beating France, brutally invaded neutral Belgium, was absolutely repugnant. The declaration of neutrality by the Italian Government, based on the absence of a *casus fœderis*, Austria not having fulfilled her obligations under the terms of the treaty of alliance, caused profound relief, as it would have been equally repugnant to feel that Italy had failed in her own obligations. The sense of relief was further enhanced when British intervention on the side of France and Russia was announced, as no one in Italy could conceive the possibility of being involved in a conflict with Great Britain, even though the agreement whereby Italy was not expected to intervene on behalf of her Allies if Great Britain was against them was not known to the public at the time.

But the Italian Government, as Signor Salandra's *Neutralità italiana* shows,¹ realized from the first that Italian neutrality must sooner or later be followed by intervention on the side of the Entente. Its duty was to prepare public opinion for intervention, and in the meanwhile to re-organize the armed forces of the nation for the coming

¹ *La Neutralità italiana*—1914-15, 1928.

struggle, both of them far from easy tasks. The interests of Italy as a Great Power made that intervention necessary, as she could not afford to let slip the opportunity of liberating the unredeemed provinces and securing the safety of her frontiers. But as Signor Salandra writes, the Government had for a variety of causes lost touch with the nation and had but little control over public opinion, which was bewildered and divided. The great majority of the deputies and senators were Giolittians, and therefore awaited the word of the Master before taking a definite line, but they were, on the whole, neutralists, as, like Giolitti himself, they had no confidence in the country, and disliked any policy outside the accustomed routine of Parliamentary life. A small group of men of moderate or conservative views, a part of the aristocracy, and all the snobs were favourable to the Central Powers, as they regarded them as bulwarks of law and order and as more aristocratic countries than Great Britain or France, while a considerable section of public opinion disliked France for the reasons set forth in a previous chapter. No one admitted and very few felt any sympathy for Austria, but Germany enjoyed a considerable prestige fostered by an able propaganda. Some Italians believed that Italy should stand by her Allies, and many members of the diplomatic service, in particular the Ambassadors in Berlin and Vienna, shared this view. The Vatican tried to maintain a detached attitude, in spite of the German outrages on Catholic Belgium and France, but, on the whole, its tendency was more favourable to the Central Powers, partly because many of the higher ecclesiastics feared that a Russian victory would result in a triumph of Orthodoxy over Catholicism in Eastern Europe. Some of the intellectuals, especially those who had been brought up on German scholarship, were pro-German—among others, the philosopher Benedetto Croce—but the majority of them were pro-Entente on account of the invasion of Belgium. The Socialists were neutralists because they disliked any policy calculated to distract the masses from class warfare and professed to believe in pure internationalism. Later, when the policy of intervention on the side of the Entente seemed likely to succeed, they became definitely pro-German and pro-Austrian, partly as a result of a judicious distribution of

German and Austrian secret service funds through the German and Austrian Socialist parties, then acting hand in glove with the Imperialists. The working classes did not follow the Socialist politicians blindly, and even some of their leaders, as we shall see, became interventionists; but, on the whole, they were neutralists, as they had never been educated up to the idea of the necessity of self-sacrifice for the defence of the country. Geographically, Piedmont and Tuscany, owing to Giolittian and Socialist influences, were predominantly neutralist, the provinces bordering on Austria and the South were interventionist, and there were interventionists among the workers of the large cities.

The Nationalists and a considerable section of the Right, especially outside Parliament, were definitely interventionist and pro-Entente, because they wished to see Italy assert herself as a really great Power and liberated from Austria's strangle-hold on the Adriatic. This view was shared by the Radicals, the Reformist Socialists who had seceded from the rest of the party, and most of the Republicans, because they regarded France and Great Britain as the Democratic Powers fighting against Austro-German reactionary militarism, and also because they were Irredentists. Irredentism, indeed, as well as the indignation aroused by the German and Austrian outrages in Belgium, France, and Serbia, and, above all, by the violation of Belgian neutrality, influenced a large mass of public opinion of all classes and parties. The natives of the unredeemed provinces were among the most active propagandists for intervention, and many of them escaped from Austria into Italy and enlisted in the Italian army; some of them, such as Cesare Battisti, Nazario Sauro and Fabio Filzi, were subsequently captured by the Austrians and executed. Among the intellectuals, prominent in literature, art, and learning, were some of the most ardent interventionists, who not only carried on an active propaganda during the neutral period, but eventually enlisted even if well over age, and distinguished themselves in action; Gabriele D'Annunzio and the philosopher Emilio Bodrero are among the most striking examples of this group.

During the first months of the war the Government maintained an attitude of strict outward neutrality, but continued its military preparations. The army was, as we have seen,

in a condition of deplorable unreadiness. Signor Salandra soon realized this state of affairs, and took the necessary measures, which were ably executed by General Cadorna. For having created an army practically out of nothing, if for naught else, these two men have deserved well of their country.

The diplomatic preparation was conducted by the Marquis di San Giuliano until his death in the autumn of the year, and, after a month's interim held by Salandra, Baron Sonnino succeeded as Minister of Foreign Affairs. When he first took over the department his attitude was not yet defined. He realized, like Salandra, that Italy could not afford to see the future of Europe settled perhaps for a century without her participation, but he did not wish for war except in the very last resort. He, therefore, conducted the negotiations for a settlement with Austria in the hope of affirming Italy's position and achieving her security without war. But when he saw the impossibility of this task and the worthlessness of Austria's promises and offers, he opened negotiations with the Entente, which resulted in the conclusion of the Pact of London (April, 1915).

As the war progressed it became ever more obvious, even to the general public, that Italy could not remain neutral indefinitely. But there were still deep divisions of opinion; the pro-Germans became absorbed by the neutralists, as there was no longer any question of intervention on behalf of the Central Powers, while the opposite tendency acquired greater momentum. Among the neutralists were many who honestly believed that neutrality was the best policy for Italy, either, like Giolitti, from disbelief in Italy's power of resistance to the terrible strain of war, or because they were convinced that the Central Powers were bound to win.

The two men who exercised the most powerful influence in favour of intervention among the public were D'Annunzio and Benito Mussolini. D'Annunzio appealed chiefly to the intellectuals and the romantically minded, through the burning eloquence of his speeches and writings. Mussolini appealed to a far wider public, one which had as yet taken but little interest in national affairs. On the outbreak of the war he was still editor of the *Avanti!* the official organ of the Socialist party, and although he had lost many illusions about the other leading Socialists,

he had no use for the Reformist Socialist group, led by Bissolati and Bonomi, who favoured intervention for reasons of sentimental Democracy. From the first he had declared himself uncompromisingly hostile to intervention on behalf of the Central Powers. When the German Socialists threw in their lot with the aggressive policy of the Empire, he condemned their conduct, and admitted the possibility that Italy might have to intervene on the other side, and that she must therefore prepare for war. This expression of opinion at once aroused bitter hostility against him in the Socialist ranks, where the peace-at-any-price attitude prevailed. At the general assembly of the party in Milan in November, 1914, Mussolini vigorously denounced "the reticent, the hypocritical, and the cowardly," and, in the face of the hostility of the audience, declared that he could "no longer remain deaf to the cry of distress that arises from war-torn Belgium and France,¹ trampled on by the only traitors of the International, the German Socialists." A few days later he was expelled from the editorship of the *Avanti!* and from the party. He then had no money of his own, but he raised a small subscription among his friends, and was thus able to found a new paper, *Il Popolo d'Italia*, as a Democratic and, indeed, Socialist organ, but favourable to intervention on the side of the Entente. Mussolini's advocacy of intervention was not inspired by bellicose sentiments nor by attachment to the Entente countries on account of their form of government, for as a Socialist his ideals were no more in harmony with the bourgeois Republic of France or the aristocratic Liberalism of Great Britain than with the Italian Monarchy. But he believed that the moral and material elevation of the Italian masses could not be achieved unless Italy became a really great Power. Only war, he declared, would arouse the Italian people out of the lethargy into which the Liberal-Democratic Government had allowed it to drift. That people, he perceived, had hitherto only vegetated, and he called for a reversion to idealism. "In order to understand this new idealism," he wrote, "we need a new, free spirit, strengthened by war, solitude, and peril."

The extremely modest premises of the *Popolo d'Italia*

¹ This expression curiously recalls the famous *grido di dolore* of Victor Emmanuel II. on the eve of the war of 1859.

became the headquarters for a group of young men from all parts of Italy, of all classes, and of the most varied spiritual origins, but all imbued with a deep idealism and patriotism and under the fascination of this arch-enthusiast for whom they were ready to do anything or go anywhere. In his spirit there was still a revolutionary trend, and the groups of followers whom he formed to promote the cause of intervention took the name of *Fasci rivoluzionari d'azione*. Mussolini believed that Italian intervention would make the Allied victory certain, and that that victory would result in the spreading of revolution throughout Europe for the raising of the masses to power. Where his conception differed from that of the Socialist revolutionaries was in its patriotic and idealistic basis, in the conviction that the strength and prosperity of the whole nation and people was necessary for the elevation of the working-classes, and also in his readiness to face all risks for the sake of the cause he advocated, in sharp contrast with the attitude of the fat, comfortable, bourgeois Socialists, who talked of revolution, but left it to be carried out by others, reserving only the well-paid jobs for themselves.

The Pact of London made Italy the ally of Great Britain, France, Russia, Belgium, and Serbia for the war against Austria (Italy did not declare war against Germany until over a year later). That agreement was afterwards denounced by Wilson and the pacifists as a secret treaty, but Colonel House has proved that the President knew all about it in 1917. Those same critics disapproved of its provisions as being too "Imperialist" in favour of Italy; Italian public opinion, however, only found fault with them inasmuch as the Allies secured Italian co-operation on terms too favourable to themselves. While the minimum safety of Italy's frontiers was provided for in the treaty, there were no provisions for granting Italy an adequate share of colonial territories, and there was only an allusion to the possibility of an Italian share in an eventual partition of Turkey. But the Italian people at that time, or at least that part of it which favoured intervention, had no thought of imposing conditions for Italian participation, and trusted in the spirit of fairness of the other Allies. It advocated intervention on general grounds—the liberation of the unredeemed provinces, assistance to France and

Belgium in expelling the invaders, and the elimination of the military predominance of Germany and Austria over Europe. Italy, moreover, was about to enter the war at a moment when the horrors and dangers of the conflict were fully realized, and when the fortunes of the Entente were at a low ebb owing to the German victory at Gorlice, which marked the beginning of the end of Russia as an ally. This fact should, Italians afterwards thought, have been taken into account at the Peace settlement as an important point in Italy's favour.

While the interventionists were gaining strength in the country, in Parliament it was otherwise, and Giolitti published his famous letter to his friend Peano asserting his belief that Italy might secure "a great deal" without war, thereby causing still further bewilderment in public opinion at a moment when it was the duty of everyone to support the Cabinet in its Herculean task, and keep the nation united. Giolitti also kept in close touch with Prince Bülow, the German Ambassador, in his last desperate efforts to avert Italy's intervention. In May, when the London agreement had already been signed and Italy was in honour bound to go to war, Giolitti made a final attempt in favour of neutrality by provoking a Cabinet crisis. Salandra knew that if the majority pronounced in favour of Giolitti's view he would be defeated, and he therefore resigned. But his resignation, provoked by the factious conduct of Giolitti and his friends, produced a national reaction, and the people realized that Italy could not now draw back without infamy. Monster demonstrations were held all over the country in favour of Salandra and intervention, and D'Annunzio and Mussolini greatly contributed to arouse the national spirit. The King, who has always sensed the pulse of the nation in moments of crisis, rejected Salandra's resignation after consulting the other leading statesmen of Italy, and requested him to remain in office. This Salandra did, and with the backing of the vast majority of public opinion war was declared on Austria-Hungary.

The return of Salandra, in spite of the evident hostility of the Parliamentary majority, was an unmistakable sign of the breakdown of the Parliamentary system. The Cabinet undoubtedly had the country behind it, and the King acted wisely and patriotically in rejecting its resignation. Signor

Salandra's Government thus became an extra-Parliamentary one, and the majority accepted this state of things, as there could be no question of a new election at that time. But the Government's position was undermined, and throughout the war each successive Cabinet was in the awkward position of having no majority of its own to count on. The consequences of this state of things were to be felt for many years to come, for they accentuated that divorce between Parliament and the nation which had been developing ever since the end of the *Risorgimento* epoch.

The Italian people showed far greater staying power under the terrible stress of the war than had been supposed possible, especially by the politician class. It responded admirably to the call to the colours, the men gave proof of excellent military qualities, and the organization of the army, although by no means without serious shortcomings, was, on the whole, adequately efficient. The war certainly welded the country into a real national unit, the last traces of local particularism died down, and for the first time in her history Italy became really one.

This unity, however, did not extend in its entirety to the political sphere. Those who had been pro-Germans and neutralists before the war did not by any means all shed their ideas, even though they kept them in abeyance for the time being, and some of them merely awaited their opportunity, silently nursing their resentment. The Socialists of various shades, who found allies in the ranks of the bourgeois neutralists, were allowed to carry on a campaign against the actual conduct of the war and against the patriotic spirit which alone could lead the nation to victory. They were free to spread defeatist rumours, to encourage the belief in the impossibility of securing a final victory, to exalt and exaggerate the successes of the enemy and belittle those of Italy and the Allies, to promote ill-feeling against France and Great Britain, to encourage discontent among the working classes and to grouse about food shortage. Among the most conspicuous leaders of this campaign we may mention the deputy Treves, whose phrase, "Next winter not another man in the trenches," spread the belief that the Socialist party could somehow or other bring about peace, the late Giacomo Matteotti, who in the provincial council of Rovigo and elsewhere persistently

gave expression to anti-patriotic and pro-Austrian sentiments, and in the newspaper world the *Stampa* of Turin (Giolitti's organ). The Government permitted this campaign to continue unhindered, because it could not count on the support of Parliament and feared the hostility of the Socialist organizations and of the Giolittians if it took a strong line. Its conduct of the war was in consequence gravely handicapped, and the army command never felt safe in its rear. It was therefore unable to guard against treachery in the interior, and the *moral* of the army was unfavourably affected.

The people as a whole was filled with enthusiasm at the gallantry of the troops, but it needed every encouragement to face the inevitable hardships of the war. At the front the excitement of the struggle, the example of the officers, the spirit of emulation and the obvious necessity of holding back the enemy kept up the heart of the men and made excellent soldiers of ignorant peasants and half-educated workmen and petit-bourgeois, who often did not realize the true character and national necessity of the war. But away from the fighting line, where the seditious, defeatist, and even treacherous elements were given free play, the spirit of the country was being sapped. Private organizations did their best, but they received inadequate support from the authorities, and what may be called the war education of the nation was left incomplete.

In time these baneful influences could not fail to produce their effects even in the army. The men who had fought admirably in the trenches and on the icy Alps, when they returned from leave were no longer the same. Seditious newspapers, which, in spite of the censorship, were printed within the interior of the country, were read during the periods of furlough and even brought back to the front lines afterwards. The workmen in the munition factories, who had been exempted from military service as indispensable and were paid high wages for safe jobs, were among the most poisonous agitators and offered a most unedifying example to the war-worn soldiers returning from the front, only equalled by the vulgar ostentation of the war profiteers.¹ Nor should the conduct of a part of the

¹ It was the exempted munition workers and other *embusqués* who brought about the riots at Turin in the summer of 1917. As a punish-

priesthood be forgotten. While the great majority of the clergy did their duty as priests and usually made excellent army chaplains and soldiers, not a few of them earning medals for valour, a certain number conducted a propaganda as seditious, although from a different point of view, as that of the Reds. The attempt of Pope Benedict XV., who utterly failed to grasp the meaning of the war, to bring about peace at a moment when it would have been solely to the advantage of the Central Powers, and his unfortunate allusion to the "useless carnage," while undoubtedly inspired by the highest humanitarian sentiments, did not fail to raise false and disastrous hopes and affect the fighting spirit of the army unfavourably, just as Treves' phrase had done. Then there was a certain number of officers who by precept and example did not do all that was possible to keep up the spirit of the troops. The officers' cadres had, of course, been enormously expanded, and masses of young men with little or no preparation had been given commissions; they represented the average type of the Italian middle-class citizen with the average middle-class mentality and education, and if the immense majority made good there was a small minority who were blind to the iron necessities of the moment and who were constantly grouching and showing lack of confidence in the outcome; others again, who did their duty as far as they themselves were concerned, lacked the qualities necessary for leadership.

Finally certain military faults were committed—men sacrificed uselessly in attempts obviously doomed to failure, defects of organization which left some units inadequately supplied with proper food and equipment, the tendency to keep the best units in the fighting line for excessively long periods, while less good ones enjoyed long turns of repose, and of course some grave errors of strategy.

It is doubtful, however, if all these shortcomings would have produced any very disastrous consequences had it not been for the incomprehension of the Government and particularly of certain Ministers and other political men, who would not see the difference between the normal wrangles and jealousies of Montecitorio and the war.

ment, they were sent to the front and continued their propaganda among the troops.

Signor Orlando as Minister of the Interior in the Boselli Cabinet was much to blame in this connection, and General Cadorna's famous four letters warning him of the defeatist and seditious propaganda in the country and among the troops were neither answered nor acted upon, as the Socialists' feelings must not be hurt. He, like many other political men who were sincere patriots and had wholeheartedly favoured intervention, had at the back of his mind an unconfessed idea of preparing a sort of moral alibi for himself for future developments by not appearing too uncompromising towards the neutralists and anti-patriots who might regain influence after the war.

Russian Bolshevism had both direct and indirect consequences in Italy. By destroying the fighting spirit of the Russian army, even before the revolution of the autumn of 1917, it enabled Austria to concentrate practically the whole of her armies on the Italian front, while its votaries were constantly preaching in favour of peace at any price, and were actually allowed to conduct their insidious propaganda and distribute funds in Italy unhindered. The Italian Government and public opinion in general failed to realize the true significance of Bolshevism and the trend of things in Russia; of all the papers the *Idea Nazionale* and the *Fronte interno* almost alone appeared to understand that Russia as an ally was finished and that Bolshevik propaganda was a deadly poison operating wholly for the benefit of the Central Powers.

Yet, in spite of all these difficulties and handicaps, the Italian army held out magnificently in the most unfavourable conditions and at the cost of immense losses, and achieved notable successes. Up to the autumn of 1917 it was the only one of the Allied armies in Europe occupying any portion of enemy territory. But the accumulation of the errors and drawbacks enumerated above combined to bring about Caporetto. It seemed as if Italy, like Russia, were finished, and destined to conclude a separate peace and perhaps fall a prey to revolution and chaos. But it was the Caporetto disaster which awoke the nation to the awful peril impending on it, and the whole country suddenly and unexpectedly pulled itself together in a desperate grim effort to hold out at all costs and win the war. Even Orlando, now Prime Minister, whose previous conduct had

been indeed partly responsible for the disaster, now showed himself at his best, and if his subsequent action proved him unable to understand the new Italy born of the war, we must not forget his determination to resist, as he said, even if the army had to fall back to the Straits of Messina, nor his action in helping to make resistance possible. The exploits of the Italian army after Caporetto, especially the defence of the Piave and Monte Grappa, which had been prepared before Caporetto by General Cadorna, are among the finest in the whole war, and it should be remembered that that was the work of the Italians unaided. The Allied contingents which were to perform splendid deeds later on Italian soil, where many of their men lie buried never to be forgotten by Italy, did not come into action until the new line of resistance had been stabilized by the broken fragments of the Italian army alone. Above all, it was at this moment that the King represented all that was best in the nation. His example, his noble appeal to resist to the uttermost, and his example of courage and self-sacrifice—not for nothing is he descended from a House that has never known the meaning of fear—produced an immense and beneficial effect.

Many military shortcomings were now made good. Not only was the army reorganized and strengthened, but the troops were better equipped and fed, even though the rest of the nation had to be put on short commons, the men were given longer and more regular periods of repose, unnecessary losses were avoided, and recreations were provided for them. The men were at last made to feel that they had the whole country behind them for the final determined effort. The results were not slow to show themselves. Not only was the new line firmly held during the winter of 1917-1918, but the important enemy offensive of June, 1918, was repulsed with heavy loss, without losing a yard of territory, and in October following the great victory of Vittorio Veneto was won, which not only destroyed the Austrian army and wiped the Habsburg Empire, Italy's incubus for a hundred years, off the map, but, by threatening Germany's flank, hastened the end of the World War by many weeks or perhaps months.

IX

THE AFTERMATH OF THE WAR

THE Armistice left Italy a prey to confused and contradictory feelings and states of mind. The nation was exalted by the victory feeling, by joy at having achieved a victory greater than any other in Italian history, and one which wiped out the painful memories of Custoza, Lissa, and Adua, by relief that the terrible struggle was at last at an end. On the debit side there was the strain and stress of the war, which had been heavier to bear than in other Allied countries because Italy was poorer in natural resources and accumulated wealth than Great Britain, France, or the United States, and the necessary effort had therefore been greater and the destruction of wealth more serious in its consequences. But whereas many of the effects of the war were to continue to be felt long after the cessation of hostilities, most people then believed that with the signing of the Armistice pre-war conditions of normality, peace, and orderly work would be immediately restored. At the same time they imagined that the re-establishment of these conditions was possible without any effort, and that now everyone could enjoy life and be richer than ever before, without working any harder, or, indeed, without working at all. Another illusion was that Italy's important contribution to the common victory would be adequately appreciated, and that the many handicaps, natural and artificial, from which pre-war Italy had suffered—too-restricted territory, lack of settlement colonies, lack of coal, iron, and other raw materials—would be eliminated, and that to Italy her proper share of the spoils of victory would be assigned by friendly agreement with the other Allies.

But it was soon realized that the war had thrown the whole economic structure of Italy, as, indeed, of the rest of Europe, out of gear, that the machinery of production,

concentrated for four years on war material, could not easily nor rapidly be turned to the necessities of peace, and that much had been destroyed and must be rebuilt. The finances of Italy had been subjected to a well-nigh unbearable burden, and could only be re-established on a sound basis through increased taxation, rigid economies, and strict administration. Few grasped the fact that the increased cost of living was chiefly, if not wholly, due to the depreciation of the currency, caused by the great increase in circulation, nor that the currency could not be brought back to pre-war parity by a stroke of the pen. What was necessary for public finance was equally necessary for private economy, and the individual citizen must likewise work harder and restrict his expenditure. Instead of which everyone wished to spend more and work less, and the Government, while imposing ever-heavier taxation, distributed it badly and inequitably, increased instead of reducing the circulation, and was too weak to impose rigid economies because it dared not resist the constant demands on the Treasury for subsidies to parasitic organizations and unsound undertakings, for extravagant and unnecessary public works, and for increasing the jobs in the civil service. Nor was it capable of shedding its war paraphernalia, and continued to maintain useless and harmful restrictions on trade.

In the field of foreign affairs, as we shall see in Chapter XIV., the situation was equally unsatisfactory.

All this tended to create a state of deep disappointment and dissatisfaction among all classes, so much so that it was not unusual to hear people say: "In the next war we had better be defeated, if this is what it means to be one of the victorious Powers." Professor Gentile tells how several of his young friends, contributors to and readers of his review *La nuova politica liberale*, on returning from the war, where they had done their duty gallantly, expected to find the country raised and purified by victory, whereas "they found nothing but disappointment and disillusion: the people exhausted and ready for any mean action, provided they could secure a life of enjoyment, the very combatants thinking only of obtaining rewards for the duty performed, and thereby squandering its moral value and beauty, all ideas obscured, all faith giving way to egoism

which was all the more violent because it had been so long repressed.”¹ Professor Volpe wrote in the same connection: “Everything was precarious and provisional, as on the eve of year one thousand.”²

The seditious parties, who had largely lost their hold over the masses during the war, especially during the last phase of it after Caporetto, because the very fact of the war had proved the falseness of the Socialist creed, realized the advantages which this state of mind offered for a new campaign of propaganda, and they were not slow to profit by it. Before the war they had repeatedly tried to bring about a political and social revolution which should place them in power, but although the pre-war Cabinets were feeble and without backbone, the Socialists had not acquired sufficient support among the masses to insure success, and the leaders were certainly not heroes. Now the masses, exasperated by the post-war difficulties, the increased cost of living, and intolerant, after the years of war discipline, of any authority, seemed ripe for a new attempt. As it was during the war, so it was now, and the Socialist leaders found allies in the bourgeois neutralists, who were itching to wreak vengeance on the men and parties who had brought about intervention and had secured enhanced prestige by the victory, but might at last be ousted from power by exploiting the general sense of disillusion.

There were also many persons of all classes who, without having been professedly neutralists, failed to realize why they should have been made to suffer by the war, and felt a sort of personal indignation, not against the enemy who had provoked it, but against those of their own countrymen whom they regarded as responsible for Italian intervention. It should be noted that these persons were, as a rule, not the ones who had really fought and suffered. Just as the most discontented among the working classes were the munition workers, so among the bourgeoisie the worst grouseurs about the post-war difficulties were the men who had been most carefully *embusqué* in Government offices. Above all, the influence of Russian Bolshevism was a direct encouragement to sedition in Italy. The Italian extremists could now point out the existence of one great

¹ Giovanni Gentile, *Che cosa è il Fascismo*, p. 173.

² *Fra Storia e politica*, p. 389.

country where their principles had triumphed, where the proletariat "dictated" and the bourgeois classes had been literally wiped out. They took care, of course, to conceal the terrible misery of the Russian people and the utter failure of the Communist experiments in every field, and described the conditions of Red Russia as those of an earthly Paradise. The leaders of the Italian Socialist party were in close touch with the Moscow Government and the Third International, and received considerable financial assistance from that quarter. The party even assumed the name of "Maximalist," in order to stress its subservience to Russia. There was, it is true, also a more moderate Socialist wing led by men like Turati and Treves, who did not wish to go quite so far as the extremists, at all events for the present, and were rather scared at the idea of a general social revolution on the Russian model, in which they might have shared the fate of the Russian moderate revolutionists; but, as always happens in similar circumstances, they did not have the courage or the honesty to express their convictions lest they should lose influence over the masses, whom they believed to be more revolutionary than they probably were in reality. They therefore allowed themselves to be led by the extremists and sang hymns of praise to Russia and Bolshevism.

The first phase of the revolutionary action took the form of a series of great strikes in the leading industries and the essential public services. The increased cost of living had made an increase of wages necessary. In some cases an increase of wages had been realized during the war, which had gone well beyond the increase in the cost of living at the time; but now that the latter increase was catching up with the former the workers were discontented because they could not spend as freely as they had done during the war. In other cases the increased cost of living had surpassed the improvement in wages and provided a justification for the workers' demands, which the employers were unwise not to grant. But what the Socialist and trade union leaders aimed at was not the betterment of general conditions or a wider measure of social justice; they merely wished to exploit the economic difficulties in order to promote a revolution. They organized the great strikes to strangle the country, hoping that by producing a general famine

the people would be goaded into rebellion. The more honest among them, perhaps, really believed that only by such a revolution could a general betterment of the masses be effected, while the rest merely wanted a revolution for its own sake and in order to secure supremacy for themselves.

The Socialist party held its first post-war congress at Bologna in December, 1918, when a general plan of campaign was drafted. Immediately after, the Postal Workers' Committee of Action, under Socialist influence, threatened a general strike of the postal and telegraph services, which was only averted by a promise of higher wages on the part of the Government. Numerous strikes of an economic character broke out during the spring of 1919, and on April 10th a general twenty-four hours' strike was proclaimed because the authorities had refused to permit a manifestation in favour of the rulers of Bolshevik Russia; this was the first, but by no means the last, instance of an unblushingly political strike. The railway service was conducted at the good pleasure of the railwaymen, or, rather, of a committee of 600 railwaymen (the "Little Railway Parliament"), who ruled over the rest with a rod of iron; although this committee was a purely revolutionary organization aiming at the destruction of the State, its members, paid by the State, received full wages, without performing any work, and travelled all over the country on free passes to conduct a revolutionary campaign. General or partial strikes on the railways would be proclaimed for the most preposterous reasons or pretexts—because soldiers or policemen were travelling on a particular train, because it was suspected that munitions were being conveyed to the British, the French, or the Poles fighting against the Bolsheviks in Russia, because foodstuffs and wine were being sent out of a province where the particular railwaymen happened to live, as they believed that such trade would cause the cost of living to rise. A train might even be held up because a judge who had dared to condemn a railwayman for criminal action was travelling by it. In one case the authorities gave orders that certain policemen travelling from one town to another should be disguised as peasants so as to avoid trouble. At Genoa a lightning railway strike was proclaimed because the Government had

dared to open a railway school for soldiers, as it was believed that troops might be employed to replace strikers. Steamers were held up at the moment of departure for similar reasons, or else to extort higher wages or free drinks, or impose an increase in the numbers of the crew. The dock labourers, dominated by the sinister fanatic Giulietti, were particularly active in this connection, and paralyzed the maritime trade of Italy to such a point that foreign vessels avoided Italian ports as though they were plague-stricken. This disastrous period of Italian life is cleverly described in Ugo Ojetti's witty novel, *Mio figlio ferroviere*.

The most astonishing economic theories were proclaimed to justify these agitations, and were seriously considered by the so-called ruling classes. The railways, it was asserted, should belong to the railwaymen, the steamers to the seamen, the factories to the workers, the land to the peasants, the houses to the tenants, the present owners to be expropriated without compensation. No one troubled to try to plan the practical application of these theories, but later, as we shall see, attempts were made to carry them out.

The Catholics, who organized themselves into a political party as the Partito popolare italiano at the beginning of 1919, at first attempted to stem the tide of revolution by presenting a somewhat more reasonable programme of social and economic reforms, together with a professedly patriotic foreign policy. But the creator and leader of the new party, the Sicilian priest Don Luigi Sturzo, adopted an attitude little less seditious than that of the Socialists, and with the pretext of taking the wind out of the sails of the Reds allowed the extreme wing of the party, led by Guido Miglioli, to promote strikes and disorders on the most approved Bolshevik lines. The "P.P." rapidly acquired influence and gained astonishing successes in the political and municipal elections, owing to the fact that it was supported by the Church, which provided it with a complete organization ready made in the parish priest and the various pre-existing Catholic institutions. It comprised persons of the most widely different views, united by the sole bond of Catholicism.

What made the situation even more alarming was the support which even the most violent and criminal agitations

found among the bourgeois politicians. The old political class had been split by the war and had emerged from the conflict gravely discredited. Many of its leaders, feeling that the power so long held by them was slipping from their grasp, thought that only by pandering to the masses drunk with revolutionary poison they might still hope to maintain their own position. This explains the weakness with which the Government and the authorities allowed a free hand to the most extreme revolutionists. While Signor Orlando was in power he was kept so busy in Paris mismanaging the Peace Conference that he had little time for internal affairs, and when he did attend to them his one idea was to kill revolution by kindness—a policy which has never succeeded at any time or in any country. The Orlando Cabinet was upset in June, 1919, as a result of the disastrous course of events in Paris, and the new Premier, Signor Nitti, tacitly espoused the cause of the revolutionary parties. The reasons for his attitude are various. He had always disbelieved in Italy and the Italian people, and was convinced that the country could only exist at the good pleasure of the other Powers. Above all, he had never believed in the possibility of an Italian victory in the war, and seemed extremely annoyed that victory should have been won in spite of his gloomy forebodings. He was also inspired by a feeling of bitter dislike for the army and for military men in general, which was enhanced by the fact that they had dared to win the war. Although he had no belief in the tenets of Socialism and realized the insincerity and profound corruption of the Socialist leaders, he was sure that the domination of the masses in some form was inevitable, and consequently did his best to secure the support of the mass parties—the Socialists and the Popolari—and encouraged the most nonsensical and pernicious political and economic theories, which he was far too intelligent not to see through. Finally, he had an inordinate ambition and self-confidence, and believed himself to be the one Heaven-sent genius capable of ruling Italy. But this ambition and self-confidence were combined with a strangely incongruous moral and physical cowardice, which made it possible to obtain anything from him by threats of violence.

The advent of Nitti resulted in a recrudescence of strikes and disorders. The instigators of the agitations openly

confessed that even under Orlando they would never have dared to go so far as they did under Nitti, and Orlando was certainly no exponent of the strong manner. Given the new Premier's dislike of the army, the savage campaign against officers and men, and even ex-service men, found direct encouragement in him. Officers and soldiers in uniform were brutally assaulted in the streets by gangs of ruffians, and sometimes murdered in cold blood; those who wore wound stripes and medals for valour were singled out for these outrages, because a man who had fought and shed his blood for the country was, in the eyes of the Reds, guilty of the most infamous of crimes. The Government merely recommended officers to go about in mufti when off duty and never to carry arms, so as to avoid giving provocation to the Bolsheviks. Nitti himself seldom missed an opportunity of inflicting humiliations on even the most distinguished officers, and refused to permit the ceremony of the Unknown Soldier (conceived by an Italian officer, but first performed in other countries), lest it should revive the memories of the war. The crowning manifestation of this attitude was the decree granting an amnesty to the deserters, thereby placing the men who had been cowards and traitors on the same footing as those who had done their duty. I have heard humble rustics ask me: "How would the Government ever be able to raise an army again, even if Italy were invaded, now that those who deserted or refused to fight are treated like those who had risked their lives for their country?" This decree exasperated every right-minded Italian more than any other act of the Nitti régime.

To please the Socialists and the Popolari, Nitti introduced a form of proportional representation, as those groups believed that, owing to their type of organization, such a system would be more advantageous to themselves, and this actually proved to be the case. The first general election after the war, held under the auspices of Nitti in November, 1919, resulted, in fact, in a considerable increase of the Socialists, who secured 156 seats in the Chamber as against 100 in the previous one, while the Popolari, appearing at the polls for the first time, secured 100. The successes of the Socialists increased their truculence a hundred-fold, and was followed by yet more disorders and outrages,

and also by a wave of ordinary crime. At Mantova there was a regular revolutionary outbreak after the election, and for a few hours the city was in the hands of gangs of Anarchists, who opened the prisons and let loose common criminals, murdered several citizens, and pillaged shops and houses, until the arrival of troops restored order. Although the Socialists were still a minority, they regarded the last election as a triumph for themselves, and were firmly convinced that at the next they would secure an absolute majority enabling them to abolish the Monarchy, the Church, the rights of property for all except themselves, and perhaps indulge in a general massacre of their opponents. They openly boasted of this programme, and terrified the more timorous among the bourgeoisie into giving expression to a certain sympathy with their ideas, in the hope of securing an alibi for themselves in the coming upheaval.

I need not repeat in detail the now well-known story of the innumerable strikes and acts of violence which occurred in this period. There were those caused by the sudden rise of prices in June, 1919, the general strike of July 20th-21st to protest against the policy of the Allies towards Russia and Hungary (although Italy was the only Great Power who no longer had any contingents in those countries), a general postal strike of January, 1920, that of the railwaymen in February, and numerous partial railway strikes subsequently. Public opinion was beginning to react against these perpetual disorders, and private associations were formed to combat them, but the Government openly discouraged such movements, and in the case of the railway strike, the back of which had been broken by the volunteer organizations, Nitti granted all that the strikers demanded, including a disguised form of pay for the strike period. When in consequence of the strike at the Mazzonis cotton-mills in the spring of 1920 the workers seized the factories, Nitti issued a decree legalizing their action. This incident convinced the Socialist and trade union leaders that they had an absolutely free hand, and the occupation of the factories in September following was its logical consequence.

The policy of Nitti in every field—the licence accorded to the promoters of revolution, the disastrous course of the

debates on the Adriatic problem, leading to D'Annunzio's seizure of Fiume, the appalling financial deficits which were being piled up, the paralysis of production, and economic chaos—created such a sense of exasperation in all parties, except the definitely anti-national ones, that after several reconstructions the Cabinet finally fell unwept, unhonoured, and unsung in June, 1920. Giovanni Giolitti, discredited though he had been owing to his policy on the eve of and during the World War, seemed to be the only man capable of saving the country from anarchy, and he was summoned to office once more. It was hoped that with his unrivalled Parliamentary experience and his skill in corrupting the sedition-mongers he might pilot the ship of State through the present dangerous waters.

He did deserve well of his country for one action. One of the chief causes of the appalling financial situation was the bread subsidy, enacted during the war, but now no longer justifiable on any ground. All experts had demanded its abolition as the first step towards financial reconstruction, inasmuch as it accounted for a large part of the deficit, but Nitti had been too terrified by the threats of the revolutionists to touch it. At the very end of his tenure of office he had been induced to raise the price of bread to a figure nearer its market value. But the sword-rattling of the Socialists had frightened him into withdrawing this measure and resigning. Giolitti did have the courage to abolish the subsidy, and the threatened revolution failed to materialize. In other respects, however, he continued to enact measures of a demagogic character to placate the Reds at the expense of the community. Nor did the disorders cease. Serious riots, accompanied by a mutiny promoted by the Anarchists among a detachment of Bersaglieri, occurred at Ancona in June, and, although the troubles were quelled, a number of persons were killed or wounded by the Anarchists. The Socialists tried to exploit the Ancona riots by demanding a full amnesty for the mutineers and other persons implicated in them and the withdrawal of the troops from Albania, as one of the causes of the mutiny was the report that the regiment in question was to be sent to that unpopular destination. Giolitti refused the amnesty, but immediately concluded a treaty with Albania, undertaking to withdraw the troops, and although

evacuation had been decided on in principle and was desirable in itself, the moment selected was a most unfortunate one, the withdrawal being carried out under pressure of the Socialists and during a rebellion of the Albanian tribes against the Italian occupation. It produced, in consequence, a most disastrous effect on Italian prestige in the Near East.

Sporadic strikes and disorders continued throughout the summer of 1920, and in September the metal workers of Lombardy and Piedmont seized the factories and tried to run them on their own account. The movement spread to other works, and incredible outrages were committed by the rioters, including the murder of two men in circumstances of great brutality. The authorities remained passive, and the Prime Minister continued to enjoy his holidays in Olympic serenity. His theory was that it was better to leave the workmen in possession (he defined their action as merely a *contravvenzione*, or breach of a by-law), as they would soon see that they were incapable of running the business without the owners, engineers, and managers. In reality he did not trust the people, the army, or the police, and dared not take the vigorous action which was called for and which would have put an end to the disorders at once, and he overrated the grit and courage of the revolutionary leaders. He subsequently opened negotiations with the trade unionists, and after protracted discussions induced them to evacuate the factories on a promise to introduce a measure providing for control by the workers over industry, a preposterous condition to which the manufacturers were forced to agree under protest, but which was never put into effect. Although the course of events did prove that the workers were unable to run factories unaided, the "occupation" wrought very serious injury to Italy's credit and industry.

Although there were no more such "occupations," a certain number of estates were from time to time illegally seized, not as a rule by real peasants, but by the ne'er-do-wells of the towns, who could not distinguish between a carrot and a cocoanut and had no idea of how to farm land. The only effect was to render farming by real farmers precarious and difficult. The worst troubles now occurred in the Romagna. That area is one of the most fertile and prosperous of all Italy; it comprises the valuable reclaimed

land of the Lower Po basin, which yields the highest wheat crops in the country. Scattered about it are many towns, large and small, all of them important agricultural centres and some of them highly industrialized. The inhabitants, including the rural labourers, are better off than in almost any other part of Italy. They are intelligent, hard-working, and energetic; Signor Mussolini himself is a son of the Romagna. But for decades those provinces had been a prey to violent political agitation, due partly to the ardent temper of the people (in the Risorgimento, and even later it was the only part of Italy where political crimes were frequent). During the last years before the war it had been the scene of a series of agricultural strikes on a large scale, and the Socialist leaders, acting through the local trade unions, had made it the base of operations for their revolutionary propaganda. The conflicts were not always between landlords and peasants, but often between Socialists and Republicans, each party trying to gain control over the masses. While a large number of the labourers had improved their conditions and become small-holders on the *mezzadria* system, tenant farmers, or peasant proprietors, the Socialists and trade union leaders did their best to increase the number of day labourers, which were more useful as revolution fodder.

After the war the agrarian struggle broke out again in a more violent form, and the Reds ended by gaining complete control over the greater part of Romagna. The landlords and farmers organized resistance with energy and ability, but the fight was an unequal one, because, owing to the influence of the Socialists in Parliament, the Government usually placed its authority at the disposal of the Red leaders. Town and provincial councils were run by the Socialists, and the Red administrations proceeded systematically to ruin the local finances, to the profit of their own organizations and leaders. The Camere del Lavoro (nominally chambers of labour, but in reality institutions to promote strikes and riots) dominated large districts, and, together with the Red unions, exercised a grinding tyranny over the whole population. Landowners large and small, farmers, and peasants who refused to obey the injunctions imposed upon them were boycotted, starved, robbed, and not unfrequently murdered. Milk was refused to the

children of boycotted parents, medical aid to the sick, and even the dead could not be buried. So certain were the Reds of impunity that the receipts which they gave for the fines extorted by blackmail were written out on the headed notepaper of the municipal or provincial councils. Bucco, the Socialist Secretary of the Camera del Lavoro of Bologna, was absolute master of the city, and no motor-car could run without a pass signed by him. No Tricolour flag could be exposed from a window without the house being wrecked and inmates brutally outraged. The citizens were actually advised by the authorities not to show the national colours, lest the Socialists should be thereby provoked. On an estate in the province of Bologna a band of Reds beat a bailiff to death and then feasted gaily round his corpse; at Molinella another gang invaded an estate, murdered the *guardiani*, filled the belly of one of them with wheat sheaves, and forced his screaming widow to assist at the spectacle. In another place 2,000 *leghisti* (members of the *leghe*, or unions) surrounded a party of non-union workers, killing six and wounding others.

It was said at the time, while the wrangle over the Adriatic problem was going on in Paris, that if Italy might hope to secure Fiume, the province of Bologna was lost beyond recall! There were, indeed, here and there actual manifestations of separatism, and not in Bologna alone. In Sardinia the so-called Partito sardo d'azione advocated a form of autonomy not very different from separatism, and there was in certain quarters a tendency to seek a solution of the many grave problems of the country in the break-up of national unity and the creation of a number of small provincial and communal republics.

Resistance to the tyrannical predominance of the Reds was attempted not only by economic unions, such as the Associazione agraria of Romagna, but also by certain new political groups which began to develop, and even in Red Bologna small nuclei of patriotic elements began to challenge the anti-national parties. It is always in moments when all seems lost and the country heading straight for disaster that the wonderful recuperative force of the Italian people shows itself most unexpectedly.

The Nationalists had come into being, as we have seen, before the war, but they were essentially an aristocratic

party (I use the word in its original sense), an *élite* of intellectuals, and too few in numbers to exercise great influence. But a new movement now arose which accepted many of the Nationalist ideals, especially in the field of foreign and colonial policy, but conferred on them a wider scope and a more popular application. Fascism arose primarily as a reaction against the anti-national and anti-patriotic conduct of the Reds, aided and abetted by the ex-neutralists and by the supine attitude of the Government and of the majority of the ruling classes, who seemed ready to abdicate their power and to offer their necks to the hangman without striking a blow for themselves or their country. It was also a revival of the spirit which won the war and of respect for spiritual values in general and an outburst of exasperation at the mutilation of the Italian victory both by Italy's allies and by the uprising of all the worst human instincts evoked by Russian Bolshevism.

The first Fascio was formed by Benito Mussolini on March 23rd, 1919, at the modest offices of his paper, *Il Popolo d'Italia* in Milan. Its original members were only 150, and its first programme contained demagogic features and not a little rhetoric, but fundamentally the movement was sound and patriotic, and appealed to the highest feelings of the Italian people. It was this profoundly national spirit which gave Fascism its hold on all that was best in Italy. While it encountered many opponents, some of them men of high character and undoubted patriotism, who disapproved of its revolutionary attitude and its tendency to violent action, its supporters were inspired by an enthusiasm such as no other movement had commanded since the days of the Risorgimento.

Professor Gentile answers the question as to how a doctrine had thus become "passion and action," by asserting that Fascism was born of the war. Possibly its origins are somewhat older, but the war certainly generalized the national feeling which made Fascism possible, without, however, overcoming altogether the lack of that feeling among the masses and in certain categories of people who were above the masses in education and social status. The task of Fascism, which it is now carrying out most completely, was, indeed, the creation of a national feeling applicable to and accepted without question by all Italians. The

war had brought together men from all parts of Italy and of all social conditions, rich and poor, Northerner and Southerner, gentle and simple, rustic and town dweller—all had been drawn into the vortex to struggle side by side and make sacrifices for the cause of Italy's nationhood. There were, however, significant exceptions, which must be borne in mind to understand the subsequent developments of Fascism. Not only was it among the highly paid munition workers that sedition was most rife, although they had been spared the ordeal of the war, but the Chamber of Deputies, which enjoyed all the privileges and was practically all-powerful in the country, gave but a very small contingent to the fighting forces, and only one of its members, the gallant Venetian deputy Count Brando Brandolin, had fallen in action. This fact is one of the reasons for the Fascists' dislike of Parliament.

The early Fasci were composed very largely of ex-service men, all with the memory of the war vividly impressed upon them, with its heroisms, its horrors, and its sacrifices; many of them had been wounded, many decorated for valour. From the first Milanese nucleus the movement soon spread to all parts of the country and all classes. It attracted ever-larger numbers of ex-soldiers, as well as many others who had been too old or too young to fight, but were filled with a deep, burning sense of patriotism and a determination to wipe out the shame inflicted on the country by the anti-patriotic revolutionists and traitors and the fatuous, incompetent, and selfish politicians. As Professor Volpe writes, men of all origins and parties supported the movement, "Monarchists and Republicans, ex-Socialists and Syndicalists, Anarchists and Futurists, but ever more homogeneous and welded, as it were, into a single mould through the action of a few energetic men emerging from amongst them; above all, of Benito Mussolini, a 'demagogue' in the best sense of the word."¹ Volpe compares the course of the movement with what happened in Italy between 1849 and 1859, when around Piedmont and Cavour and King Victor Emmanuel foregathered men proceeding from different parts of Italy, "the derelicts of many shipwrecks," men of various origins, temper, and moral stature, but united in the sense of a common danger.

¹ *Fra Storia e politica*, p. 395.

At the municipal elections of October and November, 1920, there seemed to be signs of a general national reaction, and the Constitutional parties—the Nationalists, Fascists, Liberals, and some groups of Popolari who had not yet donned red or pink robes—often united into *blocs* to fight the Socialists, and won some notable successes in many large cities. But at Milan the somewhat moderate Socialist administration of Signor Caldara was replaced by one of an extremist character led by the Communist Filippetti, although it was only elected by a small majority. Bologna returned an overwhelming Socialist majority, and the Socialists were successful in other towns of the Po Valley. In all 2,000 communes out of a total of over 8,000 went Red. The formal assumption to office of the newly elected Red councils gave rise to fresh outbreaks. At Milan there was merely one of the usual general strikes accompanied by some disorder. But at Bologna the victory gave occasion to one of the most atrocious crimes of recent years. The extremists determined to seize the occasion for a regular revolutionary outbreak, to be carried out by the armed municipal guards, the fire brigade, and bands of Communists from the provinces, who were to enter the city at a given signal. The authorities had been warned of what was coming, but took no adequate precautions to prevent a rising, and seemed more anxious about what the small groups of Fascists might do than as to the notoriously seditious intentions of the Reds. They negotiated with the Socialists and concluded a sort of agreement with the latter, who at once proceeded to violate their undertakings. The outcome was that within the Municipal Council Hall the Constitutional councillor Giordani, a crippled ex-officer and gold medallist, was barbarously murdered by the Reds, a second councillor seriously, and a third slightly, wounded. A number of people in the piazza below were killed or wounded by shots fired by the Socialists from the Town Hall.

The upheaval of public opinion was now irresistible. The Fascists organized a protest demonstration, in which large crowds took part; several Communist and Socialist leaders were arrested by the police, although the principal authors of the massacre escaped abroad; the Red town council never met again and was eventually dissolved. The

Fascists, whose numbers began to swell rapidly from now onwards, attacked and wrecked many Red institutions both in Bologna and other parts of Romagna and Emilia. At Modena and Ferrara, where several Fascists had been murdered by the Reds, their comrades exercised vigorous reprisals and destroyed the Camere del Lavoro and the headquarters of the Red *leghe*, and expelled the Red town and provincial councils. Soon the whole of the Lower Po Valley was redeemed to the national cause and the network of organized tyranny of the Red organizations was broken up. Masses of workers, sometimes whole unions in a body, especially in the rural districts, went over to Fascism, and this fact gave birth to the Fascist syndicalist movement described in another chapter. The movement spread to an ever-wider area, and a form of civil war broke out over many provinces between the Fascists and their supporters on the one side, and the Socialists, Communists and even sometimes the Popolari on the other. It was at this time that the Fascists excogitated a new and original form of punishment to be meted out to their more recalcitrant opponents—that of forcing them to imbibe large doses of castor oil. The treatment was unpleasant and made the victims ridiculous, without inflicting serious injury on them. But conflicts of a more serious nature also occurred. Fasci were springing up in almost every commune, and their members held patriotic demonstrations, to which the Reds replied by shooting or stabbing Fascists in the back, and the Fascists retorted by ruthless reprisals. Many hundreds—indeed, thousands—of Fascists fell in these encounters, and also a considerable number of Reds; but there was this difference, that the Reds were nearly always killed in open fight and by way of reprisal for murders committed by them or their comrades, whereas the Fascists were usually the victims of treacherous ambushes or of assaults when they were one to ten adversaries, although, of course, there were exceptions on both sides. Both Fascists and Reds disposed of large quantities of arms, relics of the war, but the typical Fascist weapon was a heavy bludgeon, and that of the Reds a knife. What attracted to Fascism the sympathy of many who had not actually joined it was the extreme gallantry of the youths, many of them boys barely in their 'teens, who cared not

two straws if the odds against them were ten to one and were ever ready to face the bullet or the knife of the assassin lying in ambush behind a stone wall or closed shutters. In many cases the Fascists limited themselves to arresting the authors of crimes and handing them over to the police, who should have effected these arrests themselves, but had failed to do so. In other cases the Fascist organized "punitive expeditions" to places which were hotbeds of sedition, and where men notoriously guilty of political crimes were in hiding. Some of the Red leaders simply received orders from the Fascists to quit the places where they had formally ruled supreme, and they knew that it was inadvisable to disobey these injunctions. Union leaders who had signed receipts for illegally exacted fines were now desperately anxious to retrieve these compromising documents, and ready to refund four or five times the amount extorted, because when the Fascists discovered them the signatories were liable to a severe hiding. The Fascist bands adopted the characteristic black shirt, which had been worn by the Arditi, or assault battalions, during the war.

While this civil war was going on the Socialist Congress was held in Leghorn in January, 1921, and in consequence of the injunction by the Soviets that the Italian Socialist party should make absolute and unconditional submission to the orders of Moscow and refuse to collaborate with any bourgeois Ministry, the party split up, the Communists, represented by eighteen deputies, seceding and forming a separate party and receiving the accolade as the only upholders of the True Faith according to the Moscow Gospel. As the Communists did not control the General Confederation of Labour and the large trade unions, they could not, like the Socialists, promote vast popular movements and general strikes. They therefore attempted to assert themselves over the masses by terrorist outrages. A series of such crimes were now committed, followed by Fascist reprisals. Among the most atrocious were the episode of Empoli, where a number of unarmed sailors on their way to Florence to replace the strikers in the waterworks and electricity plant were waylaid and murdered, that of Fojano della Chiana, where a lorryful of Fascists conducting a propaganda campaign for the elections was likewise ambushed and many of the young men murdered in circum-

stances of fiendish cruelty, and the horrible massacre of Sarzana in July, 1921. In Florence and other places in Tuscany there were regular revolutionary outbreaks, with barricades, street fighting, and many victims. The Fascists retaliated by summarily executing a number of the assassins and their accomplices, while others were arrested by the police, tried, and condemned to long terms of imprisonment. On March 23rd the Communists caused an infernal machine to explode in the Diana Theatre at Milan, causing the death of 20 persons and the maiming of 200 others, including men, women, and children.

Giolitti now decided to dissolve the Chamber and hold a general election in the spring of 1921. The Socialists and Communists lost a few seats, but the seditious parties were faced by a solid block of thirty-five Fascists, ten Nationalists, and a number of other deputies who, without being Fascists, sympathized with Fascism. Among the new Fascist deputies was the leader of the movement, Benito Mussolini, who, after having been defeated at the elections of 1919 (when the *Avanti!* described him as a putrefying corpse), was returned by large majorities both in Milan and Ferrara. He immediately proved himself a Parliamentary orator of the first rank, rapidly acquired an ascendancy over all the patriotic forces and groups in the country and took command of the campaign against the forces of disintegration.

Soon afterwards Giolitti resigned in consequence of the bitter attacks conducted by the Nationalist Luigi Federzoni against Count Sforza, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and after a protracted crisis Signor Bonomi succeeded in forming a new Cabinet. Although the Prime Minister belonged to the Reformist Socialist group, his Cabinet comprised several members of the Partito Popolare, and was, indeed, dominated by its *éminence grise*, Don Luigi Sturzo, without whose approval nothing could be effected. Signor Bonomi, an honest man of genuine patriotism, but without the vigour necessary to face the grave situation and the latent civil war, attempted to react against the attitude towards the ex-service men imposed by the Reds on previous Governments, and consequently allowed the ceremony of the Unknown Soldier to be held in Rome in November, 1921; the widespread enthusiasm which it

aroused showed that the masses, in spite of the copious injections of Bolshevik poison, were by no means wholly infected and were still accessible to patriotic feeling. Immediately after the ceremony a general Fascist congress was held in the capital, and there the Fascist party formally came into being. Its programme, as set forth in a speech by Signor Mussolini on November 8th, differed from that of any other party previously constituted in Italy, inasmuch as it represented for its members not merely a rule of political conduct, but a moral code. "It does not," he declared, "disregard concrete problems . . . but it also rises to an integral vision of that Italy which at Vittorio Veneto inaugurated a new period in her history." The mention of Vittorio Veneto occurs repeatedly in Fascist documents and pronouncements, as Fascism was essentially a rehabilitation of the Italian victory and a rebirth of the victory spirit which a certain class of politicians had tried to slur over as something to be ashamed of. Among the fundamental clauses of the programme the following may be quoted :

"The nation is an organism comprising the unlimited series of generations, of which individuals are merely transient elements; it is the supreme synthesis of all the material and non-material values of the race." (This idea is more fully developed in Signor Rocco's speech at Perugia, quoted elsewhere.)

"Political institutions are efficient in so far as national values find in them expression and protection."

The State must be reduced to its essential functions as a political and legal organism, the powers of Parliament limited to questions concerning the individual as a citizen, and the State as an organ for realizing and safeguarding the supreme interests of the nation, whereas national technical councils are alone competent to deal with the activities of individuals as producers. Corporations should be encouraged as the expression of national solidarity, as a means for developing production, but they must not submerge the individual by arbitrarily levelling all capacities.

The party must elevate political morality, restore the prestige of the State, vigorously combat the forces of dissolution, and enforce the principle that the country must

be governed in the interests, not of parties or cliques, but of the whole people.

In the field of foreign affairs Italy must "reaffirm her right to complete historic and geographic unity, where it has not yet been achieved, fulfil her functions as the bulwark of Latin civilization in the Mediterranean, establish over the alien peoples annexed to Italy the firm rule of her law, and give adequate protection to Italians living abroad, on whom the franchise should be conferred.

This programme asserted the necessity for the restoration of the national and local finances by means of rigid economies and by refusing doles to parasitical organisms then battenning on the State Budget. The social function of private property is recognized, but Fascism is determined to set up a system of State discipline over class conflicts, and therefore proposes that the organizations both of employers and workers shall be legally recognized and invested with responsibility; no strikes in the public services shall be permitted, all disputes concerning them to be submitted to arbitration courts. The State must hand back to private enterprise all undertakings which State organs have proved incapable of running.

Education, justice, and national defence are also dealt with, and it is asserted that the Fascist party is indissolubly bound up with its *squadre*—the living force in which the Fascist idea is embodied. The party itself is, indeed, "a voluntary militia placed at the service of the nation," and its activity is based on the three principles of order, discipline, and hierarchy.

As we shall see, the principles here laid down have to a very large extent been carried out in the course of Fascist legislation since the advent of the party to power, and although in some cases the programme has been attenuated, in others realization has gone even further, especially in the field of labour policy.

The Fascist groups were now spread all over Italy, and were coming to form a sort of counter-Government, more powerful, more energetic, and commanding greater obedience than the official one, and Fascist labour unions were springing up everywhere side by side with the old Socialist, semi-Socialist, or White (Catholic) unions. The

civil war between the Fascists and the Reds continued unabated. Certain critics of Fascism claim that long before the March on Rome all danger of Bolshevism in Italy had been eliminated. But the blood-stained records of the year preceding that event, to say nothing of the perpetual strikes in every branch of industry, agriculture, and the public services, prove the falsity of this assertion. The only difference between this period and the previous one is that, whereas in 1919-1920 the Reds had it all their own way and were even protected and encouraged by a succession of feeble Governments, in 1921-1922 they were faced by a bold, vigorous, and ruthless resistance.

The Bonomi Cabinet was attacked on all sides—by the Democrats, who accused it of truckling to the Fascists and the Popolari; by the Fascists and the Right-wing Liberals, on account of its feebleness in dealing with sedition and revolution; by the Socialists, Communists, and Popolari, who demanded drastic action against the Fascists. On February 2nd, 1922, when the Democratic group went definitely over to the Opposition, Bonomi was forced to resign, and it took several weeks before a new Cabinet could be formed. The man who succeeded was Luigi Facta, an honest, patriotic, but not brilliant politician, who owed his career to his unswerving devotion to Giolitti. His programme, as colourless and insignificant as many other similar documents, called forth Senator Scialoja's caustic *bon mot*: "There is an error in the signature; it is signed *Facta*, whereas it should have been signed *Verba*." The Cabinet contained one able man, Senator Carlo Schanzer, Minister of Foreign Affairs, who had played a useful part as Italian delegate on the Council of the League of Nations and at the Washington Naval Conference.

The Communist outrages continued, of which one of the worst was the shooting of several persons taking part in the funeral procession of the popular war hero, Enrico Toti, in Rome on June 22nd, followed by Fascist reprisals and then by a general strike ordered by the "Committee of Proletarian Defence" and the newly formed "Alleanza del Lavoro," a body composed of the Communist, Socialist, and Republican parties and the General Confederation of Labour. Further troubles broke out in the province of Cremona, promoted by the Reds of various shades and the

Left wing Popolari led by the Catholic Bolshevik Miglioli, and also at Bologna.

In the summer of 1922 an outbreak of an uncompromisingly political and revolutionary character occurred. At a secret meeting of the *Alleanza del Lavoro* the Communist members proposed a general strike throughout Italy to protest against the Government's failure to crush the Fascists, and the non-Communist members accepted the proposal because, although they realized its extreme gravity and the fictitious nature of the pretexts on which it was based, they dared not oppose it lest they should lose authority over the masses. The strike was proclaimed on August 1st almost without any warning, and a "committee of action" was appointed to take charge of the movement. The Communist and Socialist deputies who had advocated the strike did not actually take the lead because they felt it was more prudent to hide in the Chamber of Deputies until all danger was passed.

The outbreak aroused the bitterest indignation among the great majority of the people against the promoters of what was regarded as an attempt to assassinate the nation. The railwaymen and the employes of other public services ceased work, in some cities the staff of the waterworks, the electricity plants, the firemen, the street sweepers, etc., also went on strike. In many places there were serious conflicts; in Milan seven persons were killed and sixty wounded, at Parma barricades were erected, at Ancona the Communists, after murdering an engine-driver who refused to strike and committing other outrages, took temporary possession of the town.

But the Fascists intervened at once and took the lead in organizing an anti-strike movement, assisted by persons of all classes. They ran the trains and the tramways, replaced the strikers in the essential public services, and whenever they encountered armed resistance they crushed it ruthlessly. At Ancona a handful of Blackshirts recaptured the city, putting many hundreds of armed Communists to flight, and immediately after the streets were bedecked with flags. At Milan the Fascists invaded the Town Hall, expelling the Communist administration which had misgoverned the richest city in Italy, reducing it to the verge of bankruptcy; the Tricolour was raised over the Palazzo

Marino for the first time since 1914, amidst scenes of wild popular enthusiasm, recalling the liberation of Milan from the Austrians after the famous Five Days of 1848. Immediately afterwards they handed the Town Hall over to the Prefect's Commissioner, and eventually the Council was dissolved. Similarly the port consortium of Genoa, which had been largely under Socialist influence, was seized, and many other Red or Popolare administrations were forced to resign, and in most of them evidences of the most astounding extravagance, jobbery, and peculation came to light.

The events of August, 1922, had proved the impotence of the authorities, and the Fascists, who had mobilized all their forces throughout the Kingdom, gave the Government forty-eight hours in which to prove that it possessed "authority over all its employees and those who are attempting to destroy the very existence of the nation." They also called on the working classes "to shake off the yoke of the politicians by whom they were led." On August 2nd they intimated the cessation of the strike, and the *Alleanza del Lavoro*, disappointed at the incomplete nature of the agitation and the defection of masses of workmen, announced that work should be resumed the next day. The strike had, indeed, begun to fizzle out almost as soon as it had begun, and by the 3rd it had ceased everywhere except at Rome, Bari, and a few other towns, where the disorders continued for a few days longer.

The struggle now raged almost exclusively between the Fascists, Nationalists, and other sympathizers, and the Reds. The Democrats wrung their hands over the sad plight of the country, but did nothing to remedy the situation. The Government lost such authority as it still possessed, and was obeyed by no one. If the Bolshevik peril had to a large extent been by now eliminated, this was exclusively due to Fascist action, and if that action had ceased the Reds would have raised their heads once more, as their organizations were still in being and largely provided with funds; it was certainly no longer the Facta Government which could have kept them in check. But Mussolini realized that Bolshevism in its various shades was not the only danger, nor the only obstacle to the restoration of Italy. If the country was to be effectively

reconstructed, order re-established, the finances replaced on a sound basis, production encouraged, a greater measure of prosperity achieved, and Italy made a great nation worthy of her ancient traditions, a reform of the whole body politic of a much more general character was indispensable.

Above all, the financial situation was causing the gravest alarm. The deficit was estimated at six milliards of lire, and seemed incapable, as long as spineless Liberal-Democratic politicians were in power, of ever being reduced. No administration handicapped by the then existing Parliamentary conditions could think of carrying out the necessary reforms, and while the men actually in office were unable to tackle the problem, the whole class of politicians from whom their eventual successors would be drawn—a very small class, among whom for many decades office had been distributed *à tour de rôle*—lacked the boldness and heroic qualities necessary for the task, and though many of its individual members were men of excellent intentions and possessed of technical ability, none of them was strong enough to overcome the passive resistance and inertia of the system and the instability of Parliamentary favour. Only an organization like Fascism, founded on the independent and unprejudiced spirit and energetic courage of the new generation of Italians born of the war and utterly contemptuous of Parliamentary politics, could hope to succeed.

It was for this reason that Mussolini was now determined to get the Fascist party into power as the only means of salvation for the country, and a large body of good citizens outside the Fascist ranks, including many men who had never taken any interest in party politics, agreed that something of the kind was necessary. As experienced a political man as the late Baron Sonnino had declared in the previous June that nothing but a sort of *coup d'état* could save the country from irreparable disaster. The Fascist executive now presented a sort of ultimatum to the Government; either an immediate dissolution, for they were certain that a new election would return a Fascist majority, or the resignation of the Cabinet and the formation of a new one with several of the more important portfolios entrusted to Fascists. Facta rejected both alternatives, and things reached a deadlock. At the Fascist congress in

Udine on September 29th Mussolini made an important declaration in favour of the Monarchy. Originally a Republican, he had gradually, like Crispi, come ever nearer to the Monarchical idea, retaining for a time merely a Republican tendency; he now declared that that tendency had only been due to the fact that the Monarch did not appear to be sufficiently a Monarch. This statement won over to Fascism large sections of public opinion which, while approving of the general policy of the new movement, hesitated to support it on account of its possible conflict with the Crown, for, with the exception of the frankly revolutionary elements, the country was predominantly Monarchist. The army and the navy were particularly relieved, for they now felt that their admiration for Mussolini's patriotic policy need no longer conflict with their oath of allegiance to the King. While the members of the fighting services in Italy have never played any rôle in party politics, and were even then, as always, prepared to obey the orders of the Government—when there was any Government to give orders—they could not help extruding a wide measure of sympathy to a movement which aimed at the rehabilitation of patriotism and the salvation of the country for which they, too, had fought and exposed their lives. But there is absolutely no foundation for the assertion, often made in anti-Fascist circles, that Fascism was a militarist movement, and that behind Mussolini were the wicked generals and the still wicked General Staff, who merely used Fascism as an instrument for their own nefarious purposes and the satisfaction of their bloodthirsty instincts. Such statements, indeed, are only made for export purposes, especially destined for those persons to whom "militarism" is a bugbear, as no Italian has ever dreamed of any connection between Fascism and the army or navy. Nearly all the Fascist leaders were ex-service men, but after the war nearly all Italians were ex-service men, and if many officers then on the retired list joined the movement, those on active service remained absolutely outside it. To this day no regular officer may be admitted to the Fascist party.

A Fascist "March on Rome" had often been talked of, and Mussolini himself had more than once alluded to such a possibility as the only way of cleansing the Augean stables of "politicantismo" and Parliamentary intrigue,

but the public regarded such statements as mere figures of speech. But at the Naples congress of the party, when the Fascist forces, in military formation and perfectly disciplined, were reviewed by the "Duce," as he was now called, he delivered his famous address setting forth his programme, which foreshadowed immediate action. "It is not," he said, "a question of setting up any sort of Government, more or less capable of existing; what we have in view is the introduction into the Liberal State, which has fulfilled its functions—and they have been splendid functions and are not forgotten by us—of all the forces of the new generation of Italians who have won the war and the victory." This, then, was his objective—to insert Fascism into the existing institutions of the Kingdom so as to endow them with fresh vitality and vigour.

That same evening the "Quadrumvirate" was formed, composed of Michele Bianchi, Italo Balbo, the gold medallist C. M. De Vecchi, and General De Bono, a retired officer who had been the hero of the magnificent defence of the Monte Grappa and had organized the Fascist *squadre*; to Dino Grandi, another decorated ex-officer who had been returned for Parliament but had been unable to sit because he was under thirty, the political functions of the enterprise were entrusted.¹ The *squadre* concentrated in four columns and proceeded to march on Rome in real earnest, while negotiations for the formation of a new Government were conducted between the King, De Vecchi, and Grandi, the ex-Premier Salandra acting as intermediary. Facta had made a feeble attempt at resistance, and, after sending in his resignation, issued a decree proclaiming martial law. The King, who realized that this meant civil war, which he was determined at all costs to prevent, reminded the Prime Minister that the decree was invalid without the Royal consent, which he refused to give, insisting that the proclamation must be immediately withdrawn. This was done, and the danger of a conflict between the Fascists and the troops was eliminated, to the great relief of both. On October 28th Salandra was entrusted with the formation of a Cabinet; he accepted the task, well knowing

¹ Bianchi, Balbo, and Grandi were afterwards made Under-Secretaries of State, De Bono Chief of Police and then Governor of Tripoli, De Vecchi Governor of Somaliland.

that he had no chance of success, and offered several portfolios to the Fascist leaders. But such a solution, which would have been possible a few weeks before, was now rejected by Mussolini, who declared that he did not wish to see the Fascist victory mutilated. The King then sent for Mussolini, who had been awaiting the Royal summons in Milan, and he reached Rome on the 30th, the same day as the first columns of Blackshirts entered the city. The historic march had been accomplished successfully, without encountering practically any resistance and in the most perfect discipline. No acts of violence had been committed, save a very small number of acts of reprisals against Communists who had murdered Fascists.

While the long columns of Italian manhood were marching through the streets of the Eternal City—which in all its long history had never witnessed so peaceful an invasion—Mussolini was forming his Cabinet. The task was accomplished in a few hours. The *squadre* received orders to depart from Rome at once, which they did after marching past the Quirinal and paying homage to the King. The new Ministers at once entered upon their duties. Hardly any of them had ever held office before. The Cabinet comprised Fascists and Nationalists, two parties who had been acting in the closest co-operation through the recent stirring times, and were to be welded into one a few months later. But there were also Liberals of various shades, Social Democrats, and Popolari, while the Ministries of War and Marine were entrusted to General Diaz and Admiral Thaon di Revel, who had been Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy respectively at the end of the war. But the overwhelming personality, unlimited energy, and political genius of Mussolini impressed upon the whole Cabinet a definitely Fascist character, and the members of it belonging to other parties could in no wise be regarded as representatives of those parties, but had been selected on account of their experience or their personal qualities. This Cabinet was, in consequence, not a coalition, as nearly all its predecessors had been, but a Fascist Cabinet with some non-Fascists who sympathized with Fascism among its members. As we shall see, the administration was to become more and more Fascist, the non-Fascist Ministers either joining the party or leaving the Government, until,

with the exception of the Under-Secretary, Signor Mattei Gentili, who belongs to the (Catholic) Centro nazionale to-day, all are Fascists. Of the original Ministers only Mussolini himself is still in office, but several of the original under-secretaries have become Ministers, notably Signor Rocco, Minister of Justice, and one of the most influential members of the Cabinet, while nearly all the ex-Ministers now occupy important positions outside the Cabinet, except two, who are dead, and one alone—the Duke Colonna di Cesarò—who became an opponent.

The Mussolini Cabinet was essentially an extra-Parliamentary one; it was the result, not of a designation by the Chamber of Deputies, as all its predecessors, with one exception, had been, but, like that of Salandra in May, 1915, designated by the nation outside Parliament. The Chamber, created by Giolitti, after his own image, was still predominantly Giolittian. But the majority of the nation was unquestionably pro-Fascist, the Giolittian majority at Montecitorio accepted the *fait accompli*, and Signor Mussolini secured repeated votes of confidence by large majorities, until a new Chamber was elected in the spring of 1924 with a definitely Fascist majority. The Senate from the first was predominantly pro-Fascist, although the great majority of its members owed their nomination to Giolitti. On assuming office, Mussolini presented a list of some half a dozen names for nomination to the Senate, and subsequently added several more. The Fascist majority has always remained solid, but with an anti-Fascist minority ranging between 25 and 30 per-cent.

Thus, after the complete breakdown of the old Liberal-Democratic political class and the senile decay of the Parliamentary system, the great experiment of finding another system of governing the country through other men had begun. The whole body politic and the social and economic structure of Italy were entering upon a new phase and about to be transformed out of all recognition. It was a change as complete as that which had converted Italy from a conglomerate of Austrian provinces and separate States into a free, united, and independent nation. The new system was not evolved at once; it is, indeed, still in the course of evolution. But from the beginning of the Fascist régime an entirely new practice of government was applied.

X

THE EVOLUTION OF FASCISM

WHEN at the end of October, 1922, Signor Mussolini became Prime Minister, it was his intention to leave the political institutions unaltered and to carry on the Government according to their provisions, at all events during a first period. It must not be imagined that the Constitution granted by Carlo Alberto to the Sardinian Kingdom in 1848 had remained unchanged since that date. Apart from numerous legislative enactments extending the suffrage and otherwise altering its character, the Statuto had been arbitrarily modified in the spirit, if not in the letter, and often definitely violated by many of Mussolini's predecessors. Under Giolitti, indeed, it existed only on paper, and through a succession of Ministries the Chamber of Deputies had been allowed to usurp the functions reserved to other organs of the State—the Crown, the Senate, the Executive—until it had come to concentrate in itself practically all the powers of government and to exercise a sort of dictatorship. The advent of the Fascist *régime*, irregular as it had been in outward form, actually resulted in a return to Constitutional tradition, inasmuch as it restored the balance of the various organs. But in course of time it became clear that not all the clauses of the Constitution were suitable to present conditions, and certain changes inevitably forced themselves on the new Government.

The great handicap from which Italy, in comparison with other modern nations, was suffering was the lack of a true national sentiment. Italy has had specimens of every form of government known to history, from effective despotism to anarchy, but none which was the outcome of her own conditions. Since the creation of the Kingdom she has had many policies and parties, but until the advent of Fascism none of them of really Italian origin. She borrowed her Liberalism from England, her Radical-Democracy with its

Masonic tinge from France, her Socialism from Germany, and her Bolshevism from Russia. This necessity for borrowing political conceptions from other countries was one of the consequences—indeed, the chief consequence—of her lack of national feeling. France, Great Britain, Spain, and, in a sense, even Germany, had been nations for centuries, and their peoples took national sentiment for granted, as an idea which did not even require to be discussed. In Italy, for historical reasons, it was quite otherwise, and when unity and independence had been materially achieved, the spiritual idea of nationhood had not penetrated into more than a small part of the population, as we have seen in our rapid survey of Italian history. Even during the World War, which involved such a vast national effort, some sections of the population did not feel it in that sense.

The difficulties which faced the statesmen placed in charge of the Kingdom after unity had been won were so serious that they had not time to consider the question of the formation of a true national spirit. From 1861 to 1876 the country was ruled by the men of the Right, who adopted Liberalism simply because they had to present themselves in one of the political guises then existing in Europe, and Liberalism seemed the most popular, but it was in the nature of a reach-me-down, and did not fit properly. In 1876, the Left came into power, and adopted the Radical-Democratic garment, believing it to be more progressive, but this, too, was a ready-made garment purchased, not at Whiteley's, but at the Bon Marché. Democracy was interpreted in the sense that every man had a right to do as he pleased, and culminated, after a series of revolutionary agitations, in the murder of King Humbert. The reign of Victor Emmanuel III. was characterized by numerous useful social reforms, but also coincided with an ever-growing Socialist agitation, which, if it helped to promote those reforms, also contributed to retard the formation of the national spirit, by adding to the absence of such a feeling in a large part of the population a sentiment of actual hostility towards it. After the war the various Socialist and Democratic tendencies found their extreme expression in Bolshevism and Anarchy. Fascism came as a reaction to this form of disintegration, and its task from

the very beginning, but more particularly after it came into power, was to create the sense of conscious nationhood. Many of its aspects, which to the foreigner accustomed to that sense for centuries appear violent, rhetorical, and even absurd, are necessary for a people in whom national sentiment had to be built up. When once that sentiment is taken for granted, as it is in other lands, those aspects of Fascism, having ceased to be necessary, will disappear.

The chief drawbacks of the pre-Fascist political system were the instability of Governments and the impossibility of enacting measures which, however advantageous to the country they might appear, were opposed by small but noisy and pertinacious groups of politicians by whom they could be depicted as "anti-democratic."

In pre-Fascist days there had been many admirable statesmen in office whose patriotism, honesty, and capacity were unquestioned; but they were unable to carry out measures which they rightly regarded as desirable because they had to devote three-quarters of their time to circumventing Parliamentary intrigues to oust them from power.

The following data will give some idea of the instability of Italian Cabinets during the twentieth century: Saracco, June 24th, 1900, to February 15th, 1901; Zanardelli, February 15th, 1901, to October 29th, 1903; Giolitti, November 3rd, 1903, to March 27th, 1905; Fortis, March 28th, 1905, to December 22nd, 1905; Fortis again, December 24th, 1905, to February 8th, 1906; Sonnino, February 8th to May 27th, 1906; Giolitti, May 27th, 1906, to December 10th, 1909; Sonnino, December 10th, 1909, to March 31st, 1910; Luzzatti, March 31st, 1910, to March 31st, 1911; Giolitti, March 31st, 1911, to March 21st, 1914. Thus, in fourteen years there had been eleven Cabinets. From March 21st, 1914, to October 22nd, 1922—eight years—there had been eight more Cabinets!

During the immediate post-war years, when all the energies of the nation should have been concentrated on reconstruction, Parliamentary degeneration reached the most extreme limits, and Signor Nitti, who was afterwards to pose as the paladin of Italy's lost liberties, contributed more than anyone else to bring about that degeneration. It is not, therefore, surprising if the people became every day

more divorced from Parliamentary politics, and looked upon them as something almost wholly outside the life of the nation. The spectacle offered by those politics was certainly not an edifying one, and the public outside Parliament took less and less interest in its proceedings and tended to become actually hostile to the institution itself. Those who to-day profess to be horrified at the anti-Parliamentary sentiments and actions of the Fascists either have very short memories or are manifestly insincere. The elimination of Parliamentarism, such as it was in Italy before October, 1922, is, perhaps, the greatest of the benefits conferred by Fascism on the country. Parliament did not represent public opinion, nor did it, as a whole, show that it realized the necessities of the country, although there were, of course, individual exceptions.

After the march on Rome, Signor Mussolini was, however, in a perfectly Constitutional position. He had secured repeated votes of confidence from a Chamber elected, not under his own auspices, but under those of Signor Giolitti, and from a Senate only half a dozen of whose members had been nominated on his proposal. At the subsequent elections of 1924, carried out with probably more legality and certainly less violence and disorder than any previous one, he secured an overwhelming majority. In addition to a definite Fascist majority, there was a number of men who, although not registered members of the party, supported its policy and called themselves *fiancheggiatori*. In the Senate, a solid majority continued to support the Government. Opponents claim that these results were only secured because there was behind the Government the armed mass of the Fascist Militia, into which the irregular *squadre* had been transformed. But even in past times Ministers made use of the armed forces of the Crown (for such the Militia had become)¹ to win elections, with the difference that often, especially under Giolitti, these forces had actually operated, whereas under Mussolini there was only the fact of their existence. Even the Socialists and Communists frequently had resorted to the use of armed force to terrorize the voters and blackmail the Government. Nor should it be forgotten that the existence of the armed Blackshirts was the result of a spontaneous popular reaction against the subversive

¹ For the character of the Militia, see Ch. XI.

activities of the anti-patriotic parties and the agnosticism of the professional politicians and the so-called governing classes.

The Fascist Government was, moreover, the first which had ever secured the support of a vast mass of public opinion outside Parliament, and it was this fact which made it different from all its predecessors. In this sense it was a non-Parliamentary Government, but, as we have seen, it was not the first of this kind in Italy.

There continued to be an Opposition, composed of heterogeneous elements—Socialists, Communists, and Republicans, who were uncompromising opponents outside the Constitution, a part of the Catholics (one group had become definitely pro-Fascist), and a variegated body of Democrats, Liberals, and Radicals of many shades and undefined principles. When the Matteotti affair occurred the Opposition regarded it from one point of view alone—that of the possibilities it offered of upsetting the Fascist *régime* in a flood of opprobrium and scandal, and of re-establishing a Government of the old type, which no one outside the Parliamentary Opposition wanted. For the sake of such a result most of the opponents of Fascism would have been glad to see twenty Matteottis murdered. They hoped that by appealing to the naturally humane sentiments of the people they could raise such a storm of obloquy against Signor Mussolini as to render all resistance impossible, as had been attempted successfully in the case of Crispi. A shadow Government was actually formed, and although its actual composition will probably remain a matter of dispute among future historians, there is reason to believe that the Premier-designate was either Signor Amendola or Signor Nitti, with Count Sforza at the Foreign Office, Guglielmo Ferrero as Minister of Education, while a portfolio would no doubt have been found for Professor Salvemini.

No one honestly believed that Signor Mussolini individually, or the Fascist party as a whole, was responsible for the Matteotti crime, although it suited the purpose of many to profess such a belief. The most that can be said is that certain individuals of criminal instincts had succeeded in securing the confidence of some of the Fascist leaders and that they abused this confidence for their own purposes.

As Signor Delcroix points out,¹ that the Matteotti affair was a political attempt rather than a common crime is proved by the fact that almost all the men involved in it have gone over to the enemy and are now plotting abroad against the *régime*. In any case, it was a belated episode of the civil war which had raged since 1919.

Signor Mussolini was able to repel the assault of the Opposition successfully. He was, indeed, in a far stronger position than Crispi had been. In the first place, he was a much younger man, in the full vigour of his powers; secondly, he was not compromised in Parliamentary politics; and, thirdly, he had a strong extra-Parliamentary position in the country and a far-reaching highly organized and admirably disciplined party at his back, within which a number of very able, intelligent, and conscientious men, young and full of energy and enthusiasm, were ready to follow him to the death.

The Opposition made every mistake which it possibly could. The two most serious were the coalition between its Constitutional groups and the Socialists, Communists, and war-traitors, and the "withdrawal on to the Aventine." The unholy alliance between men who professed the most unswerving respect for the Constitution and whose chief charge against Mussolini and the Fascists was that the *régime* had violated the Constitution, and men whose undisguised object was to overthrow all the existing institutions, including the Monarchy and the rights of property, and who prided themselves on being the servile lackeys of the Moscow Government, and with men who during the war had acted in the interests of Italy's enemies, was as monstrous and cynical a piece of political opportunism as has ever been committed. The withdrawal on to the "Aventine" definitely placed the Opposition outside the Constitution. The alleged motive for this exodus was that the members of the Opposition could not remain in the Chamber cheek by jowl with men of such moral turpitude as the Fascists, lest their virtue be contaminated. This attitude might have had some appearance of justification if those adopting it had been the purest of the pure and had consistently maintained it until the so-called "moral ques-

¹ *Un uomo e un popolo*, p. 349.

tion" was solved. But neither of these conditions was fulfilled. If many of the members of the Opposition were honest and patriotic men, many more were tarred with a much blacker brush than any supporter of the Government; as for the Ministers themselves, not a scrap of serious evidence against them of complicity in the crime or of dishonesty in general has ever been produced. Nor did the opponents maintain their attitude of abstention consistently. Many gradually dribbled back individually, and in January, 1926, a number of Popolari tried to creep into the Chamber unobserved on the pretext that they wished to take part in the commemoration of the late Queen Margherita. This attempt aroused violent demonstrations on the part of the Fascist majority, which refused to allow them to return. The Premier suspended the sitting, and when the Chamber met in the afternoon of the same day, he declared that if the absentees wished to resume the duties they had so long neglected (while drawing their salaries and enjoying their other privileges as deputies), they must declare that they recognized the Fascist revolution as an accomplished fact and as a *régime* which had profoundly modified the Constitution of the Italian State, that consequently an Opposition based on preconceived notions was useless and absurd, publicly recognize that the campaign of slander conducted by the "Aventine" had failed and that the "moral question" concerning the Fascist Government or party did not exist, and publicly dissociate themselves from those who were plotting abroad to subvert the *régime*. As they refused to comply with these conditions, a law was enacted depriving them of their seats in Parliament. This procedure may appear irregular and unconstitutional, but the Aventiniani had undoubtedly struck the first blow at the Constitution by their withdrawal. In Italy their expulsion aroused comparatively little excitement, and few tears were shed over the exclusion from Parliament and public life generally of men who had contributed nothing to the general welfare of the nation and whose whole existence had been based, at best, on petty intrigue and, at worst, on an even lower level of political morality. The most respected opponents of the Government deplored the Aventine movement, but were not strong enough to resist it, and even they were, to a

large extent, outside the real life of the country and out of touch with its necessities and, above all, with its new tendencies and aspirations.

The position of the Communists was somewhat different. They had never withdrawn from the Chamber, but Communism is an essentially anti-national movement aiming at the complete destruction of the Italian State and, indeed, of all modern civilization, and is consequently incompatible with the existence of Fascist Italy. As an English Judge declared in court, Communism is not a political party but a criminal association. They continued to attend the sittings of Parliament undisturbed until, after the attempts on Signor Mussolini's life, with which they appear to have been closely associated, or, at all events, in sympathy, their organization was dissolved and their representatives were excluded from the Chamber.

In spite of this "purging" of Parliament, certain Opposition groups remained. In the Chamber there were the followers of three ex-Premiers—Giolitti, Orlando, and Salandra. Orlando himself had withdrawn from politics after the resounding defeat of his supporters at the Palermo municipal elections of 1925, for he realized that there was no longer any place for him in Italian public life, but the members of his group still remained in the Chamber. Giolitti and Salandra, with their followers, did likewise, but they offered only the mildest opposition. Salandra, indeed, could almost be regarded as *rallié* to Fascism as far as foreign policy was concerned, and there are passages in his book on Italy's neutrality suggesting that even in internal affairs he is no uncompromising opponent. In any case, his bad health precludes him from taking an active part in politics, and in May, 1928, he was, on Mussolini's proposal, created senator. Giolitti had become definitely a back-number, and represented nothing in the Italy of the day. In spite of the lip-service which he occasionally paid to Democracy, he had never had anything approaching a political creed. He only re-emerged to express his disapproval of the new electoral law on the ground of its alleged unconstitutional character in March, 1928, a charge which would have carried more weight had it been advanced by any other statesman than Giovanni Giolitti, and in July, 1928, he died in his 86th year. In the Senate there has

always been an Opposition group, which occasionally makes a declaration; in the debate on the new electoral law in May, 1928, forty-six senators voted against it.

But all these various Oppositions have ceased to have any organization or to represent any common principle, programme, or aspiration, except hostility to Fascism and a yearning to see the bad old methods, so pleasant and profitable to the professional politicians, restored. Like the Bourbons after 1815, they have learned nothing and forgotten nothing.

In the meanwhile, Fascism was rapidly evolving into an entirely new conception of government and political life, inevitably leading to new forms of political institutions. Signor Mussolini had made repeated attempts to offer the olive branch to his opponents. At first, as we have seen, he had been willing to accept and actually had accepted the collaboration of non-Fascist groups. This having proved impossible, he had governed with the Fascist alone, but without intolerance towards other parties. At the end of 1924 he made a further attempt at conciliation by abolishing the electoral law under which the elections of 1921 had been held and which conferred on the party securing a majority at the polls a two-thirds majority of seats in the Chamber, and restoring the system of single-member constituencies abolished by Nitti in 1919. But the utterly uncompromising attitude of the Opposition proved that nothing would satisfy it except the overthrow of Fascism. Hence the vigorous speech of January 3rd, 1925, with which Signor Mussolini definitely threw down the glove and challenged the Opposition to come out into the open. Fascism became more and more exclusive, and, as is said in Italian, *integrale e totalitario*. The State must be transformed into a Fascist State, definitely different from and in contrast with the old Liberal-Democratic State. Professor Alfredo Rocco, the Minister of Justice, in a speech delivered at Perugia on August 31st, 1925, fully endorsed by the Premier, set forth the evolution of Fascism as a theory of government. He began by explaining the previously accepted atomistic and mechanical theory of government, whereby the State was regarded as merely the sum total of the individuals composing it at a particular moment.

All the political doctrines obtaining in Europe until quite

recent times asserted that the aim of society was the welfare of its individual members, and its consideration was limited to the living generation. The function of the State was to co-ordinate the various co-existing liberties; hence the many limitations of its authority established in order to weaken it as compared with the liberty of the individual. From Liberalism—government by a small minority selected to represent the interests of the whole nation—the passage to Democracy was easy, and the theory that all men are equal and all have an equal right to govern the State came to be universally accepted. From political equality we pass to economic equality; if all citizens are politically equal, it is inadmissible that there should be a small group of exploiters and a large mass of exploited. The State must, therefore, step in, abolish private property and the monopoly of the means of production, and attribute all profits to the workers, who are regarded as the only real producers of wealth. Hence the passage to Socialism and eventually to Communism is equally easy.

Fascism, Professor Rocco asserts, rejects the theory of equality. Each individual differs from every other. Humanity is grouped into many societies, widely differing from each other in character and degree of civilization. Each of these various societies is not merely the aggregate of all the individuals composing it, but comprises the infinite series of generations which have contributed to form it in the past, constitute it to-day, and will continue to constitute it in the future. In the Fascist doctrine, society does not exist for the individual, as in the Liberal-Democratic doctrine, but "the individual exists for society, with this difference, that Fascism does not annul the individual in society as the individual annuls society in the older doctrine, but merely subordinates him to society." Fascism believes that the necessary conditions whereby the individual may freely develop his personality must be secured; but it does not recognize in the individual a right to liberty superior to the State. Fascism rejects the theory of popular sovereignty and sets up in its place the sovereignty of the State. This does not mean that the mass must be excluded from all influence in the State. On the contrary, especially in peoples with a long history and great traditions, even among the most humble there grows up an instinct of the

necessities of the race, which at historic moments reveals itself with an almost infallible instinct.

Fascism rejects Socialism, which does not take human nature into account and does not realize that the most powerful lever of human actions is the interest of the individual. But Fascism intends to secure justice between classes as between individuals; hence it is determined to eliminate the self-defence of classes, which, like the self-defence of individuals, is peculiar to barbarous ages. "It was the powerful movement of social regeneration emanating from the war, of which Fascism is the most genuine expression, which led Italian thought in the field of political doctrine to its traditions, which are the traditions of Rome. . . . By virtue of Fascism Italy once more speaks to the world, and the world is beginning to listen to her. It is a great task, and it requires a great effort. To accomplish it everyone must liberate himself of all the detrita of ideas and mental habits which two centuries of foreign intellectual tradition had accumulated, and re-create not only his culture, but his soul. . . . We demand this effort of renovation and collaboration of all Fascists, indeed, of all conscious Italians. After the hour of sacrifice, there comes the time for tenacious effort."

The consequence of the penetration of these doctrines into the Fascist party, and, indeed, into the nation as a whole, where they found the ground prepared for them by the failure of the methods of government of the past *régimes*, was to engender an ever greater contempt for Democratic ideals. These ideals had certainly never proved suitable to Italian conditions and had failed to take firm root in the national mentality, imbued as it was with the spirit of Roman law and the sense of the necessity of authority, although the principle of authority had fallen into abeyance. Even in other countries there is to-day almost everywhere a reaction against Democracy, a conviction in many circles that that theory has done its time, and that at least a revision of it is necessary. As long as the suffrage was limited and political activity was more or less the monopoly of a restricted class of citizens filled with the traditions of political life and public service as a duty to the nation, for performing which no rewards were demanded, the Liberal system could and did work satis-

factorily. Even in Italy Liberalism has rendered notable services in the past and helped to build up the nation, as the Fascists themselves admit. But with the advent of universal suffrage, Democracy and the doctrine of the equality of all men, the machinery began to show signs of breaking down. If in Great Britain the system still works, more or less cumbrously but not unsatisfactorily, in spite of the disappearance of the two-party system, it is because the democratization of the country is still incomplete and the great tradition of a governing class still survives to a considerable extent. In Italy these conditions did not exist, and the old system broke down completely.

What the new system will ultimately be it cannot as yet be definitely stated. But there are certain general principles gradually emerging from the welter of ideas and concepts brought forth by Fascism, which, unlike other movements, began as a practical method of government and only developed a theory, still incomplete, later on, which are coming to be universally accepted. The first of these principles is that of respect for the authority of the State, which is regarded as the necessary premiss for all national progress. We have seen in Signor Rocco's speech what the Fascist conception of the State is. It is something much wider than the totality of the individuals comprised in it, and, indeed, embodies the whole spiritual unity of the nation, which must be safeguarded in a more complete fashion than was ever thought of before under the looser Liberal-Democratic conception, in which it was almost outside the real life of the citizens. In Mussolini's idea the Fascist dictum is: everything within the State, nothing outside or against it, but the State is never divorced from the people.

As a natural corollary to this idea of the authority of the State, we have that of the disciplinary principle of hierarchy. Liberal opponents are apt to decry the tyranny of the Fascist State, and, of course, in an all-powerful State abuses almost inevitably creep in. But the principle of State authority, as long as that authority is in the hands of capable, honest, and patriotic men, is preferable to that of mob authority. The present rulers of Italy, taken *en bloc*, are certainly better and more competent than their predecessors, and if some of them individually are not up to the

general standard required of them they can be, and, indeed, often are, changed and replaced by better men, whereas under mob rule or the rule of weak men without real authority and subject to mob influences, the results are always bad and the remedy is extremely difficult, as unsuitable men are apt to be replaced by men no better than themselves. In Italy the need for restoring the principle of discipline was all the more urgent, as the country had always been essentially undisciplined, and before the March on Rome had reached such a state of disintegration that only a strong hand could pull it together and bring it up to the level of other great countries.

This conception of discipline and hierarchy, as distinguished from oligarchy, is not unlike that on which the Catholic Church is based, although too close comparisons are apt to be misleading. While the Church is ruled by an infallible Pope through the bishops and the clergy, whose authority may not be gainsaid, yet it is ever in touch with and amenable to public opinion.

One of the first consequences of the acceptance of these principles is the necessity for the maintenance of public order as more important than liberty in the ordinarily accepted meaning of the latter term. Order is, indeed, absolutely essential for a country like Italy, which is poor in natural resources, and cannot, therefore, afford the luxury of civil strife and economic upheaval. Before the advent of Fascism, breaches of the public peace were numerous and serious, and those responsible for them were seldom punished or even regarded with reprobation. Anti-Fascists, native and foreign, often deplore the real or alleged acts of Fascist violence, but we should remember what happened before Fascism was born or thought of. Strikes and other labour troubles were usually, and elections often, accompanied by acts of violence and bloodshed; the Socialists would inveigh against the authorities for allowing the mob to be fired on; the authorities retorted by referring to the outrages committed by the mob against the soldiers and police, who were only doing their duty and showing incredible patience under intolerable provocation; and at the end of the dispute the one fact which remained indisputable was that men had been killed or wounded on both sides simply because that State was not strong enough to prevent

disorder. I well remember, even before the war, that whenever there were elections, exciting debates in the Chamber, strikes, or rumours of strikes, in Rome and other cities the courtyards of all the great palaces and Government buildings were filled with troops and police from morning to night, ready to be called out in case of disorders, while detachments of cavalry and mounted carabinieri patrolled the streets. Yet in spite of these precautions disorders occurred, because no one believed that these precautions foreshadowed action. To-day this is no longer the case.

More serious consequences ensued in the field of international politics. Signor Salandra, in his volume on Italian neutrality, when speaking of the grave difficulties by which his Government was faced, declares that "the welding of the nation's spirit, the fusion of all opinions in a single policy, although notable progress was achieved, was never realized in Italy, even when the refusal to follow such a policy was a sin, indeed a crime, against the fatherland. It was, perhaps, a consequence of the fact that the form which the war assumed was such that we did not feel constrained to participate in it. It was, perhaps, due to the irremediable weakness of a Government which for many years had ceased to have the country in hand and did not live in spiritual solidarity with it."¹ This passage explains much that happened in Italy during and after the war. But to-day no one can say that the Government is out of touch with the country.

Another essential principle of Fascism is that of national co-operation, the collaboration of all classes for the common good as embodied in Fascist syndicalism, the details and manifestations of which are examined in another chapter.

A fourth principle is that no rights are conceivable without duties, whereas under the demagogic régime the people were taught that they had many rights but no duties. Mazzini alone of the older Democrats always insisted on duty as the necessary premiss to rights, but Mazzini was regarded as obsolete by the more modern Democrats, and described as a fool by Karl Marx. A fifth principle is that production is more important than distribution, particularly in a poor country, where the production of wealth must inevitably precede a more perfect attempt at distributing it. Sixthly,

¹ *La neutralità italiana*, p. 241.

the spirit of self-sacrifice must be instilled into the whole people, of a sacrifice which must be unlimited, extending to that of life itself, if it is necessary for the security of the nation, and comprising every form of self-control, and the elimination, as far as possible, of self-indulgence.

Finally, we must not forget the principle that citizenship is not in itself a natural and permanent right common to all men, acquired at birth and enjoyed until death. Man must work constantly to deserve his rights and justify his existence by doing something useful, not merely to himself, but to the community. As a French Catholic writer stated, there Fascism meets with all our religious communities; in all Israelite and Christian communities or churches the new-born child is admitted on the pledge, taken for him by his sponsors, that he will discharge his duties and accept the law of the community of which he becomes a member. Such a pledge he has to confirm on his coming to adult state. Citizenship becomes, finally, with the whole political reality, a moral and Christian reality, and the only real equality of men can be attained in a State in which each man is rated according to his actual value."¹

I do not, of course, claim that these principles are fully appreciated or lived up to by every Fascist; even among those who profess to believe in the new doctrine there are, no doubt, many who regard self-sacrifice as the duty of others and wish to reserve the advantages of the new *régime* for themselves. There are profiteers among the Fascists as among other parties and groups, men who regard Fascism only as a stepping-stone to further their own interests. But Fascism has set up a noble ideal to be striven after, and the great mass of the party are genuinely inspired by it and take the civic and political duties of the creed very seriously, filled as they are with an enthusiasm and fire such as were unknown in other movements in Italy. Even those who only do lip service to Fascism help to spread the notion that its ideals should be lived up to.

One of the first practical consequences of the advent of Fascism was the conviction that "electoralism" must be got rid of. No aspect of the old Liberal-Democratic Italy was more undignified and contemptible than the scramble for electoral success. It not infrequently degraded men of

¹ Aline Lion, *The Pedigree of Fascism*, pp. 8-9.

high intellectual attainments and moral sense into committing ignoble actions. Every lie, every form of hypocrisy, every lapse from dignity or even common decency, could be justified by "electoral necessity." The system extended to every field of national life. It reached its zenith in the Chamber of Deputies, but also operated in the municipal and provincial councils and in innumerable other public and private bodies, acting as a serious handicap to the proper conduct of business. Distinguished scholars and University professors resorted to electioneering trickery to secure seats on the various boards connected with the Ministry of Education, while the iniquities of the *Parlamentino ferroviario* became a byword among the people. The Senate alone of all the old institutions retained a measure of dignity, just because it was not an elected body, and although its members were nominated by the King on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, the latter a product of the Democratic electoral system, it often represented public opinion more truly than the elected Chamber.

In the early days of the Fascist *régime* the electioneering disease began to penetrate the various Fascist organizations, and cadging for executive offices was somewhat conspicuous. But very soon the campaign against electioneering was taken up with ever-increasing vigour. First, the system of elections within the Fascist party was abolished, and a rigid hierarchy took its place, the Secretary-General of the party, chosen by the Premier (not as such, but as head of the party), appointing the various officers at the head of the provincial Fasci and the other dependent organizations, who in their turn appointed their subordinates and collaborators. Next came the turn of the municipal administrations. Many communes, especially the smaller ones, were run by a small group of families or by a single family in their own interest; where the Socialists were in power—and this was the case of many of the largest communes, such as Milan and Bologna—the administration was conducted with the most reckless extravagance and often with unblushing corruption, solely for the benefit of the supporters of Socialism, and largely for that of the mayor and his relatives and personal friends. Jobbery existed sometimes in the non-Socialist communes, but

almost always in the Socialist ones. A humorous incident which occurred in a small town of the Lazio is characteristic of the mentality of the municipal electorate in certain areas. The Socialists were then in office, and the mayor, an ignorant and comparatively harmless rustic, used as an instrument by a more unscrupulous gang of Red leaders, being a poor man, needed a salary to compensate him for abandoning his own work. The Communal and Provincial Law prohibits local administrators from receiving salaries or allowances; but the difficulty was got over in this way—the mayor rented his donkey to the *municipio* at 30 lire a day! The Prefect, or the Minister of the Interior, always had the right to dissolve municipalities and provincial councils which violated the laws and proved incompetent administrators, and to place a *commissario regio* or *prefettizio* in the former, or a *commissione straordinaria* in the latter, in charge temporarily until new elections could be held. But they often did not dare to do it on account of the political support enjoyed by the delinquent administrators. The Socialist-Communist town council of Milan, which had become a sink of corruption and graft, could not be touched, although it had violated every law on the administrative Statute Book, to say nothing of the criminal code, until the Fascists took matters in their own hands (see pp. 169-170).

The Fascist Government had no hesitation in dissolving numerous administrations of this character. But it went a step farther and introduced the system of the *Podestà*, appointed by Royal Decree, in certain towns. At first the system was limited to communes of less than 5,000 inhabitants and to watering-places, while in Rome, which had to be withdrawn from the arena of electoral squabbles, a Governor was appointed. Subsequently the *podestàs*, who proved better administrators than most of the elected mayors, were extended to the whole country. The *podestà* is selected from among the local notabilities, but where there is no suitable man an outsider may be appointed, and two or more small adjoining communes may be placed under a single *podestà*, thereby simplifying administration and effecting considerable economies. The *podestà* receives no salary, unless he is an outsider, in which case he receives a small allowance. In many communes, the *ex-sindaco*, if he had proved a capable administrator, was appointed

podestà. It was amusing to read in an important English paper that the city of Florence had been placed under a carpet-bag politician, the unknown Piedmontese Garbasso having been foisted on it as podestà; the "unknown Piedmontese" happened to be one of the most distinguished scientists in Italy, who for many years had been professor of the Florence University and had for a long time been the elected sindaco of the city. The podestà is assisted by a consulta, composed of representatives of the various trades, professions, and interests in the commune; its powers are only advisory, but on many matters the podestà must consult it before taking action, even though he is not bound to follow its advice. The members of the consulta are at present appointed on the proposal of the syndicates and other bodies, but in time, with the more complete organization of the syndicates, the podestà will be placed in ever closer touch with public opinion without, however, a reversion to the deplorable methods of electioneering intrigue. The electoral principle in some form or another may eventually be reintroduced when the public has been weaned of the abuses of the past.

If the drawbacks of the demagogic system were serious in the administrative field, they were far worse, as we have seen, in that of Parliament, and a new system of political representation is now being evolved. Within the Fascist party, the various councils and bodies have gradually been eliminated, or, at least, have lost their importance, with the exception of the Grand Council, composed of the Cabinet Ministers and certain other representative Fascists, which has come to be the predominant organ of the party. Its authority has now extended to the field of Parliamentary representations, and, together with the syndicates, constitutes the chief source of power. Under the recently voted electoral law, candidates for Parliament are proposed by the thirteen leading economic organizations into which the producing classes are divided; the number of candidates proposed is two and a half times as large as the total number of members of Parliament, who will now be 400. The Grand Council then revises the list, adding certain other names of men representing interests and activities which are not of a purely economic nature. The Grand Council thus drafts a list of 400 candidates, which is not sectional,

but national, and the citizens are called to vote on the list *en bloc*. The right to vote is not conferred on all the inhabitants indifferently, "but only on those who, on the basis of syndical contributions, give evidence of being active elements in the life of the nation, and on other categories not contemplated by the law on the legal discipline of collective contracts, but who are, nevertheless, useful to the national community." Should this list not secure a majority of votes, another election is held with competing lists, which may be proposed by any organization of 5,000 citizens.

The scheme thus devised is regarded as calculated to meet the requirements of the situation—*i.e.*, to provide for stability and a proper respect for the authority of the State and the interests of the community as a whole, and to keep the Government in touch with and amenable to intelligent public opinion without the drawbacks of "electoralism." But it is a provisional measure, and may be modified after the next Parliament, when it will be seen how it works. We must remember that the system is evolving and that it is an attempt to find a way out of the very serious difficulties brought about by the systems of the past. The new system is conceived with the object of avoiding the danger of relapsing into the old method of purely political electoral representation, and, at the same time, the potential danger of creating a system based too exclusively on economic interests. It is suggested that with the perfecting of the syndical organizations it will be possible, after the experience of the next Parliament, to arrive at a form of purely corporative representation. But others are of opinion that the corporations should not become the sole basis of legislative power, as there are certain aspects of national life which cannot be brought within the four corners of a syndicate and are outside purely economic considerations. In any case, we must not forget that the system is undergoing a process of evolution. There is a permanent commission of deputies and senators to whom the task of watching the working of the new system and proposing amendments when necessary is entrusted.

It has been observed that the voting of a list proposed by the Government is not really an election, but a plebiscite or referendum. This is true, as the voter does not vote for this or that candidate in any particular constituency, but

for a programme and a policy. It is a sort of ratification of the action of the Government in the past and an expression of confidence (or the lack of it) for the future, rather than a creation of the powers of the Government. A small majority would act as a warning that the policy hitherto pursued must be revised, and were the Government list to fail to secure a majority at all there would be the possibility of an alternative Government and system.

One point which is apt to strike the foreign observer is that the candidates of the first list under the new electoral law must be Fascists. This means, it is asserted, that Parliament is to be composed of one party only. But we must bear in mind that in Italy to-day there is only one party, if we except those groups which aim at the complete annihilation of Italy as a civilized country. The Constitutional opponents of the Fascist *régime* are not, and never have been, real political parties at all, with a regular organization and large bodies of registered members pledged to support them, but merely shades of opinions and followers of individuals, incapable of setting themselves up as possible rulers of the country in substitution of Fascism. On the other hand, there are coming to be within the Fascist Party itself many different opinions and tendencies, which undoubtedly make themselves felt to-day and will do so to a larger extent in the future, so that in time all reasonable views—*i.e.*, all those which do not aim at the complete subversion and destruction of the Italian State and nation—will be able to influence public policy. Then, as I have said, there is the possibility of alternative lists, which, if unlikely to secure a majority at present, offers a possibility for the future. If the non-revolutionary opponents were to be given the opportunity to-day of competing on an equal footing with the Fascists, they would, in the first place, have no chance of securing a majority; if they were to ally themselves with the revolutionary groups—which would be a monstrous travesty of Constitutionalism—they might secure a slightly larger number of votes, but not a majority, and the mere attempt at such a combination might well lead to civil war, which would no doubt end in a further triumph of Fascism, but would prove gravely injurious to the nation and hold up its peaceful progress for a considerable time.

If a real Opposition existed, an Opposition composed of

men unconnected with the bad old methods of the past and capable of presenting an alternative scheme of government better than the Fascist one, there would be some reason for its existence. But at present there is no such thing, and with very few exceptions all the finest brains and the highest characters in Italy have rallied to the support of the Fascist *régime*, even if they do not all call themselves Fascists and do see much to criticize in some of the policies of the Government. Those who regard themselves as leaders of the Opposition are either the *ferri vecchi* of the disastrous demagogic Parliamentarism of the past, incapable of conceiving any working policy, or unblushing revolutionists. It is an Opposition of discarded politicians and journalists without a following, a paper screen with nothing solid behind it, in whose flutterings the ordinary working public has ceased to take any interest. Here, again, the situation is not unlike that of the post-Risorgimento period. When the Kingdom of Italy was formed it had been the work of an heroic minority, which came to establish its rule over a people the majority of whom were indifferent, while a considerable minority were hostile to the new *régime*. The new rulers had to resort to methods which might well shock sensitive Democrats, but were necessary for and accepted by the nation as inevitable. Numbers of officials had to be summarily dismissed for their adherence to the dispossessed Governments and princes; in the University of Naples alone thirty-two professors were got rid of at one fell swoop on account of their Bourbon sympathies. But in time the new *régime* came to be taken for granted.

Within the new *régime* of united Italy tendencies arose and parties were formed, but the past was the past, and no one thought of trying to revive it. Thus it is with Fascism; within its orbit there is room for all opinions not incompatible with the new principles of patriotic national unity which have come to stay. But a return to the old demagogic conception of competitive parties cadging for popular support by means of promises which they have no intention or possibility of maintaining, to the spirit of agnosticism and scepticism which disbelieved in everything except immediate material interests, is, we must fervently hope, impossible. Fascism was the result of the crisis of the old

Parliamentary régime, which exists not only in Italy, but in almost every country of the world, because the traditional Liberal institutions, evolved when the franchise was limited and only a tiny class was interested in politics, no longer function under Democracy and universal suffrage. The crisis was more serious in Italy than elsewhere, and consequently the remedy had to be more drastic.

The mere form of government and the details of the electoral system are of small importance to-day as compared with the manner in which the country is administered. The public, in fact, now takes far more interest in the latter than in the former. Those foreign critics of things Italian who deplore the "loss of liberty" appear to be more deeply attached to their own theories than to the welfare of the Italian people. "Perish the people," they say—or, at least, so they think in their own hearts—"provided that the 'Immortal Principles' are respected."

The Fascist party has thus come to be practically identified with the State. The Fascist emblem appears on Government buildings, public offices, and official documents side by side with the escutcheon of Savoy, and the Fascist hymn *Giovinezza* is played immediately after the Royal March or National Anthem on official and patriotic ceremonies. It might, therefore, be thought unnecessary to preserve the party as an independent organization any longer. But it exists and is necessary as a driving force by the side of the State—the Ministries, the various Government departments, the public organizations of all kinds—to inspire their action and guide their policy. The bureaucracy has remained practically unchanged in outward form and organization, and a large number of officials, including many in the highest ranks, are not Fascists. This does not mean that they are anti-Fascists, but merely that they are not members of the party, and that, while accepting and approving of its essential principles, they are not filled with the Fascist spirit of enthusiasm, which would perhaps be difficult to infuse into a body of rather old-fashioned and traditional bureaucrats, elderly in mind if not in years. The party is there, outside the doors of the departments, to provide the necessary vigour and inspiration. Many of the non-Fascist officials are useful and experienced men, and even if they are of Fascist sympathies they cannot join the

party, as admission to its ranks has been suspended for the last two years. It is not considered desirable to admit as Fascists anyone and everyone, and to-day only two classes of persons may join it—viz., those on whom the *tessere d'onore* are conferred, and the Avanguardisti. The former are individuals, few in number, who, although hitherto outside the party, are not only in full sympathy with it, but have rendered valuable services to the nation. The Avanguardisti are young men who have been through the juvenile organizations of the party and have just reached the age for admittance as full members.¹ On attaining the age of eighteen, the Avanguardista is admitted to the Fascist party as a full-fledged member, thus providing an annual contingent of 80,000 new recruits, who have been brought up on Fascist principles and are filled with the enthusiasm of youth. The training of youth is, indeed, one of the greatest and finest achievements of Fascism, and the youth of Italy have been transformed for the better out of all recognition. It is on them that Signor Mussolini counts to secure the stability of the *régime* in the future, whatever may happen to him or to the other leaders of to-day. Fascism thus comes to be every year more and more the party of the future. A large part of the Fascist institutions and laws are inspired by this consideration, and are designed to provide for the Italy of to-morrow even more than for that of to-day, and it is from this point of view that the observer must consider them. Not for nothing is the title of the Fascist hymn *Giovinezza*.

It is often stated, and sometimes even believed abroad, that Italy is groaning under a grinding tyranny and that everyone is spied on and that no one dare express his opinion lest he be immediately thrown into prison. People who repeat these stories are almost all ignorant of the Italian language or of Italian conditions, and get their information from persons who only tell them what they like to hear, or romantics who prefer picturesque tales of Borgia-like tyrants and black-cloaked conspirators to the plain realities of life. I remember reading with much amusement an account in a London daily paper that the front doors of Roman flats had little spy-holes, and that when the bell was rung the inmates, before opening, said

¹ See Ch. XVII.

"Chi è?" This was supposed to be evidence of the existence of a reign of terror, whereas it is a custom dating from past ages and surviving in Rome and other cities in certain old-fashioned houses of certain quarters, but which is rapidly disappearing. Those who have any knowledge of Italy know that these highly coloured stories are nonsensical. One has but to travel about Italy and listen to or take part in conversations in public and in private to hear many views expressed and many criticisms freely made. Some months ago a distinguished Swiss professor told the present writer that he deplored the Fascist system which had introduced the habit of espionage and *délation* into every phase of Italian life, to the extent that fathers dared not speak openly before their sons nor brothers before brothers. Yet only a few days later an Italian lady in Florence, who had been asked by the wife of a prominent Florentine Fascist to meet the present writer, refused the invitation, saying that she was a rabid anti-Fascist and had no wish to meet a Fascist like Villari. This statement she made in a large drawing-room full of people.

One is constantly meeting persons of notoriously anti-Fascist views who not only are undisturbed, but continue to hold public positions and draw Government salaries. I could quote many instances from among my own circle of acquaintances, such as that of a man who wrote signed articles violently attacking Signor Mussolini and Fascism in the foreign Press and still holds a leading position in a public educational organization. Recently a Neapolitan paper published a list of the Southerners who had signed the anti-Fascist "Manifesto of the Intellectuals" (it was rather surprising to see some of the signatories described as intellectuals at all!) in 1924, with the indication of the positions they occupy at present; out of several dozen only two had lost their appointments. I could add many other names to the list.

The only form in which freedom of expression is severely limited is the Press. Until the Matteotti murder there had been full liberty of the Press. But that deplorable affair had given occasion for such an outbreak of virulent attacks on the Government as to provide daily incitements to revolution and fresh murders. Some measure of restriction became, therefore, imperative in the interests of public peace

—there had, indeed, been several outrages directly attributable to the so-called Quartarella¹ campaign, which in turn provoked reprisals by the more irresponsible Fascists. Subsequently these restrictions were relaxed, and Opposition papers began to appear once more, although in a somewhat chastened mood, now that it became evident that even the Matteotti affair was not going to overwhelm Fascism. Then came the attempt on Signor Mussolini's life at Bologna in October, 1926, which aroused such an outburst of national indignation that further restrictions were clamoured for on all sides. The new Press regulations enacted by the Government simply gave expression to a widespread popular demand, as public opinion was, rightly or wrongly, convinced that the outrage, and the others which had preceded it, had been directly fomented by the attitude of the Opposition Press. The result was that Opposition papers ceased to appear. There is no regular censorship of the Press, and persons are not punished for Press offences, because none are committed, but the editors do not publish attacks on the Government because they know that if they did the issue of the paper would be confiscated.

The disappearance of the Opposition Press has its drawbacks, no doubt, of which the chief is that it enables all sorts of preposterous stories without the slightest foundation on fact to be spread about, whereas if they had been printed they could easily be refuted. But the public at large is only slightly affected by these restrictions. It knows that the anti-Fascist Press was inspired by one consideration only—that of upsetting the *régime* and enabling the old-time politicians who had brought Italy to the verge of disaster to recover the spoils of office. Even the *Corriere della Sera*, which, until the Crespi group bought out Senator Albertini for 55,000,000 lire, was the best Opposition paper, was notoriously inspired in its anti-Fascist attitude by Albertini's personal disappointment at not having been made Minister of Foreign Affairs or at least Ambassador in Washington, positions which he regarded as due to him in virtue of his activities at the Washington Disarmament Conference. Moreover, the violent attacks of the hostile Press resulted in equally violent retorts by the Fascist Press, and might even lead Fascist youths to attack

¹ The Quartarella is the wood where Matteotti's body was found.

the offices of Opposition newspapers. For many months the office of the Rome *Mondo* had, indeed, to be protected by the police. Perhaps if the situation continues to remain normal, there may again be a relaxation of these restrictive measures. But, in any case, public opinion is not excited by the matter one way or another. Italian papers have by no means deteriorated technically since the imposition of these restrictions. One reads in them better and fuller accounts of international events than in the papers of any other country except in two or three London dailies of the first rank, while technical, literary, artistic, and archæological questions are discussed intelligently. In any case, the spectacle offered by the so-called free Press of many other countries, when the freedom is that of half a dozen multi-millionaire newspaper proprietors, is not such as to make Italians regret its disappearance.

It is also often stated that no Italian can ever read the attacks made on Italy and Fascism printed in the foreign Press. As a matter of fact, foreign newspapers, with the exception of a few sheets such as the *Daily Herald* or *Pravda*, circulate freely in Italy, the Italian papers often reproduce anti-Fascist articles printed abroad (not unaccompanied by sarcastic comments), and the Press Bureau of the Foreign Office issues two publications, which anyone can buy or subscribe to, reproducing all the chief articles, friendly or hostile, appearing in the foreign papers and reviews. Nor is it true that foreign correspondents are unable to send messages unfavourable to Italy or the *régime* to their newspapers. The best proof of this is the fact found in the columns of the *Manchester Guardian*, whose Rome correspondent sent innumerable telegrams and articles from Italy for several years, almost every one of which was bitterly hostile to Fascism and to Italy; yet he was not expelled. Only two foreign correspondents have been expelled from Italy for sending mischievous nonsense to their papers. Many other Governments could show a far more uncompromising record than that. Nor does the system prevail in Italy, as it does elsewhere, of creating newspapers to voice the views of and boom one politician, or defend a particular financial interest.

If freedom of the Press is limited, it by no means follows that freedom to express opinion, especially on the part of

experts, does not exist. On the contrary, the expert is more listened to than ever before, and his opinions carry more weight, as they need no longer be discounted by electioneering considerations. When the Government proposes to enact a measure the Press may praise it unstintingly, but the experts within and without Parliament and the departments always have the means of calling attention to its defects or the drawbacks to which it may give rise, especially through the syndicates, and these criticisms are usually taken into account before the measure is drafted in its final form. The difference between the present system and the old is that in the past a measure would be praised by the friends of the Government and criticized by its opponents, regardless of its real merits or shortcomings, and amendments were usually accepted only inasmuch as they were presented by men or groups whose support the Government required. The consequence was that every law was the result of a compromise, so devised as to placate the largest number of influential deputies or *grandi elettori*, and very often the amendments introduced nullified the measure and rendered it inoperative. Under the present system, mistakes can be and no doubt are made, but at least every opportunity is given for expert opinion to be heard, and each measure can be discussed on its merits.

The spirit of the Fascist *régime* was summed up by Signor Mussolini in his circular to the Prefects of January 5th, 1927. Under Liberal-Democratic rule the chief function of the prefect was to secure the return of Ministerial candidates and of municipal councillors belonging to the parties favoured by the Government. Signor Giolitti, during his long terms of practical dictatorship, had appointed large numbers of prefects, selecting them after his own image, and through them dominated the country and, above all, the elections. Their other functions were of a varied nature, but almost all of them directed towards securing political support for the Ministry—or, rather, the Prime Minister—by means of favours, subsidies, jobs, decorations, etc. In the maintenance of order, which should have been their primary duty, those unfortunate officials never knew how to act. They would receive contradictory or incomprehensible instructions; if trouble occurred and was severely repressed, the Government, needing the support of the

Socialists or Radicals, would not hesitate to sacrifice the prefect. If, on the other hand, the mob got out of hand and the orderly elements protested against the inaction of the authorities, the Prefect was equally to blame and liable to be transferred within twenty-four hours to Sardinia or Calabria, or even placed a *disposizione*. But an election in which a *persona non grata* was elected (this did not by any means imply a Socialist, but was more usually a Constitutional opponent against whom Giolitti had a personal grudge) was the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost.

Signor Mussolini has a very different idea of a prefect's duties, and he has, indeed, radically changed their whole status in the administration. His conception of those duties are embodied in the above-mentioned circular, where they are laid down as follows :

1. The Prefect is the highest authority of the State in the Province. All citizens, "and in the first place those who have the great privilege and the highest honour of being Fascists," owe him respect and obedience, and must collaborate with him to render his task easier. Authority cannot be divided, and the Fascist party and its organs, now that the revolution has been accomplished, are merely a conscious instrument of the will of the State.

2. The Prefects must provide for the defence of the *régime* against all who try to subvert it or weaken it. But their action must be intelligent, "because it is at times inadvisable to elevate to the perhaps hoped-for and solicited dignity of martyrdom the innocuous and the foolish." Above all, the residues of illegality must disappear. Now that the State is armed with all the means for prevention and repression, "whatever may happen in general or may happen to me, the epoch of reprisals, of devastations, of violence is ended." This injunction is repeated with particular emphasis with regard to possible demonstrations against foreign representatives. "Relations between peoples are so delicate and may entail such grave consequences that it is absolutely intolerable that they should be at the mercy of irresponsible demonstrations or *agents provocateurs* trying to bring about irreparable acts." Moreover, it is the Prefect's duty to tell the Government the truth, the whole truth, "especially when it is unpalatable."

3. Public order must not be disturbed in the slightest

degree. "Public order, secured and guaranteed, means the calm, profitable progress of all the activities of the nation." But the Fascist Prefect must not only provide for the maintenance of outward order, which is a public function; he must also safeguard moral order, which constitutes a policy of conciliation, balance, peace, and justice, wherefore "moral order" becomes the condition of "public order."

4. An authoritative *régime* such as Fascism must provide the most absolute guarantees for the good administration of public funds. "I have often said that the money of the people is sacred; consequently, all administrative and financial organs, from the municipalities to the syndicates, must be the object of the most vigilant attention and the most rigid control. . . . All who administer public funds must be of the most unquestioned probity. . . . Especially in the South of Italy, the Prefect of the Fascist *régime* must establish the epoch of absolute administrative morality, resolutely stamping out all survivals of the camorra and electioneering intrigue of the past *régimes*." The Prefect must insist on the elimination from all the organs of the *régime* of profiteers, swindlers, the faint-hearted, the sowers of discord, and all those who have no clear and available occupation.

5. It is enjoined on the Prefect to give the greatest possible consideration to all the associations of ex-service men, of the disabled veterans, war volunteers, gold medallists, mothers and widows of Fascists who have been killed by the Reds, supporting and extending sympathy to their activities. "Those are the Italians who have fought and shed their blood for forty months, who bear in their flesh the signs of the sacrifice and duty accomplished."

6. "The Prefect of the past was, above all, an electioneering agent. Now that there is no longer any talk of elections the Prefect changes character and style. He must take all the initiatives calculated to enhance the prestige and strength of the Government, both in the social and in the intellectual field, and see to it that the Government's measures of a social nature or concerning public works shall not be handicapped. "The Prefect must have a care for the needs of the people, he must find out unspoken necessities and the too numerous ignored miseries, in

order to secure every possible benefit for the people and show them that the Fascist State is not egotistical, cold, and unsensitive. Without any demagoguery or servility it must do good to those who are deserving."

Seldom has a Government set forth so worthy a programme in such emphatic terms. Its record shows that it has, to a large extent, carried out its intentions. The Prime Minister considered this circular as the embodiment of his ideas on public administration. On January 5th, 1928, a year after it had been issued, he sent the following telegram to all the Prefects of the Kingdom: "I remind you of the circular of last year and not merely in order to commemorate it."

The political history of Italy since the advent to power of Signor Mussolini's Government has been largely the gradual absorption of Fascism into the Constitution and the body politic of the nation. As the Prime Minister himself said in his report to the Senate on the Bill on the Fascist Grand Council of November 8th, 1928, no one, "not even among the most pertinacious opponents of Fascism, can now any longer doubt that from the revolution of October, 1922, there emerged, not merely a Ministry nor even a Government, but a new order of society and what is called a *régime*." Step by step this process has evolved. The fact of a Cabinet arising, not from a "Parliamentary designation," but from a national movement outside Parliament was the first step. The dissolution of the armed *squadre* and the formation of the *Milizia nazionale*, the affirmation of Fascism as the one Government party, and the exclusion of the members of the "Aventine" and the Communists from the Chamber, the conferring of legal status and legal recognition on the labour syndicates, the creation of the various great organizations "by the side of the State" (*organizzazioni parastatali*), such as the Opera Balilla, the *Dopolavoro*, the *Istituto fascista di cultura*, etc., were further steps in the same process. "The chaos of Liberal and Democratic individualism" has thereby been replaced by an organic order and an organic discipline.

The final step was the absorption, in the autumn of 1928, into the Constitution of the Fascist Grand Council, undoubtedly one of the most important of all the measures

enacted by the Government. The Grand Council was created immediately after the advent to power of the Fascists, to co-ordinate the various forces of the party and the *régime*. But Fascism gradually ceased to be a party like the others, "encamped in the State and in constant struggle among themselves to dominate it." The Fascist State, Signor Mussolini added, "unlike the Liberal-Democratic State, does not regard itself as divorced from the life of the nation and does not believe that social forces should be abandoned to themselves, to fall an easy prey to the first occupant. . . . To confer power on the masses and leave them to themselves—*i.e.*, to groups, parties, and demagogues—signifies in practice the ruin of the State and anarchy." Fascism has succeeded in doing what the past *régimes* neglected to do by penetrating among the people, the peasants, the working men, the farmers, the small bourgeois, and has got close to the children and the youth of the country, "interpreting the needs of the people, educating it politically and morally, organizing it not only professionally and economically, but also from the point of view of military necessities, education, culture, and recreation. . . . No aspect of national life escapes this wise discipline, through which we may truly say that the whole people, and not a restricted class of politicians, participates in the life of the country." No honest and competent observer will question this statement; to-day a far larger number of citizens are directly interested in the management of public affairs than was the case in the past, when a couple of thousand individuals had the whole of the *res publica* in their hands, they alone enjoying the fullest liberty and licence to do what they pleased, while the rest of the thirty-five or forty millions of Italians did not count.

This identification of the *régime* with the State made it necessary to place the Grand Council among the basic organs of the Government. Originally composed of a varying number of members, comprising usually the Fascist Ministers, the higher officials of the party and certain other personages selected from time to time, it had no regular constitution and its duties were not precisely laid down. It met at intervals and acted as a sort of unofficial liaison organ between the Government and the party, voted

certain resolutions, and made proposals which were usually, but not invariably, accepted and carried out by the Government. But what the Grand Council formerly did for the Fascist party alone it must now do for the Fascist State, co-ordinating its various institutions and organized forces. Such a task could not be entrusted to the Chamber of Deputies, which is both too numerous and also too incomplete, inasmuch as certain fundamental forces of the State, such as the Senate, are not represented in it, and the same remark applies to the Senate itself.

At a meeting of the Grand Council on September 19th, 1928, a new scheme defining its position and functions was drafted and submitted to the Cabinet and then to Parliament, with whose approval it became law. The Grand Council thus comes within the constitutional order of the State, and "while the personal synthesis of the State finds expression in the August person of the Supreme Head, the King, the collegiate synthesis of the various organizations existing in the State is realized in the Grand Council." With regard to the Government, the Grand Council is both the liaison agent between it and the organized forces of the State, and its regular adviser on political matters. It is not above the Government, but by the side of it. The function of Parliament is to legislate and to inspect, whereas the Grand Council is the supreme advisory organ to the Crown, the ordinary adviser of the Government, and in an advisory capacity alone participates in the legislative function. Further, it has certain definite duties of its own, such as the formation of the lists of candidates for Parliament to be submitted to the popular vote, and the direction of the activities of the Fascist party.

By the provisions of the new law some of the members of the Grand Council are appointed for life (the *Quadrumviri* of the March on Rome, the Cabinet Ministers who have, as such, been members of the Grand Council for at least three years since 1922), others are *ex-officio* members (the Presidents of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, all Cabinet Ministers, and certain other high dignitaries of the State, who remain members only as long as they hold their appointments), and others, again, are men who have rendered valuable services to the country and the Fascist movement, and are appointed for three years. The members

receive no pay or allowance of any kind beyond their salaries, if any, for the other offices which they may hold.

The deliberative functions of the Grand Council are those already mentioned concerning the electoral lists (according to the law of March 17th, 1928), the general direction of the Fascist party, and the appointment of the chief officials of the party. Its advisory powers are even more important. It must be consulted on all constitutional Bills and constitutional questions not embodied in a regular Bill—such as the declaration of war and peace. By this provision a definition is made of constitutional laws as distinguished from others; they are those concerning the succession to the Throne and the prerogatives of the Crown, the composition and duties of the Grand Council itself, of the Senate, of the Chamber of Deputies, and of the Prime Minister, the power of the Executive to enact juridical rulings, relations between the State and the Holy See, the syndical and corporative organization, international treaties implying any alteration of the territorial area of Italy or her colonies. No measures of this kind can henceforth be enacted without a more careful examination than would be necessary in the case of other laws, and thus greater stability is conferred on the fundamental institutions of the State.

But perhaps the most important of all the functions of the Grand Council is that of drafting and keeping up to date a list of names to be submitted to the Crown in case the office of Prime Minister should become vacant through death or resignation. This provision secures the continuity of the *régime* independently of the life of any particular individual; the text was drafted by Signor Mussolini himself after a long debate in which all possible contingencies were examined. Under the old system, when a Prime Minister resigned, the King sent for the chief leaders of Parliament, or, rather, those who dominated the Chamber of Deputies, as that body had usurped a sort of unconstitutional privilege over all the other organs of the Government, and his choice was consequently very limited. Under the new law, the King has a much wider choice; he is merely assisted in his choice by the presentation of a list carefully thought out beforehand and not based exclusively on the sudden contingencies of the moment. Another function entrusted to the Grand Council is that of drafting a

similar list to be submitted to the Prime Minister of possible Ministers and Under-Secretaries to fill any vacancies in the Government.

This law definitely sets the seal of Fascism on the State and establishes the *régime* in the same manner as united Italy was established after the wars of the Risorgimento.

A good deal of curiosity is aroused as to the position of the Monarchy with regard to the Fascist *régime*. It is often alleged that the overwhelming personality of Mussolini and the power of the Fascist party have thrown the Monarchy into the shade. As a matter of fact, the Monarchy has always kept out of party politics and has only intervened when the Government of the day was obviously running counter to strong currents of public opinion, as on the eve of Italian intervention in the World War and at the time of the March on Rome. But, apart from those moments of exceptional crises, the King has always left the government of the country to his Ministers; when they did not govern, as so frequently happened before the Fascist *régime*, no one governed at all. Now that there is a strong Government, supported by the majority of the nation, there is even less reason for the intervention of the Crown. This does not mean that the Crown does not make its influence felt; it has done so on various occasions, both before and after the advent of Fascism, always with tact and in a spirit of friendliness towards the men actually in power. The present *régime*, far from putting the Monarchy in the shade, has actually enhanced its prestige and dignity, and made the public realize the importance and value of its existence as one of the essential elements in the body politic, whereas in the past it was apt to be regarded as a mere figurehead without any real functions.

XI

THE DEFENCE OF THE STATE

THE measures enacted to safeguard the State and the *régime* against sedition is the part of Fascist activity which has aroused more criticism than any other, especially among the supporters of the traditional Democratic theory, and in foreign countries where Italian conditions are imperfectly understood.

In order to grasp the realities of the Italian situation we must never forget that for some decades before the advent of Fascism the authority of the State had been steadily declining; Signor Salandra, in his above-quoted work on the period of Italian neutrality, clearly brings this out. "Parliamentary Democracy," he wrote,¹ "recognized and professed as the ideal type of free Government, was revealing, in Italy as elsewhere, its irremediable contradiction to the authority of the State."

Even during the war it had been possible for revolutionary organizations to conduct a defeatist campaign and a criminally seditious propaganda, seriously jeopardizing the security of the country, as was seen on the occasion of the Caporetto disaster, and materially contributing to prolong hostilities. This campaign was conducted not only by the Socialists, Anarchists, and Communists, in whom such an attitude is comprehensible, but even by Liberals, Democrats, Clericals, and persons affiliated to no particular party, either because they or their friends were not in office, or on account of the habit, inveterate in many Italians, of criticizing everything done by the Government and of expressing contempt for their country and the rest of their countrymen as evidence of their own superiority.

After the war, authority fell into a state of almost complete paralysis (except for occasional possibilities of doing

¹ P. 205.

harm), and even the best-intentioned and most patriotic Ministers were powerless in the face of the overwhelming wave of sedition and anarchy, and of the indulgence shown to such agitations by the so-called ruling classes.

With the advent to power of Fascism an entirely different spirit inspired the Government and the majority of the nation, which for the first time came to trust the State. But as there was still a rabidly seditious minority, determined to upset not only the new *régime*, but the very foundations of the State, Signor Mussolini and his advisers set to work to build up such a legislative system as would safeguard the authority of the State against all the forces of disruption both within and without the country. A series of stringent laws were enacted dealing with the various disintegrative elements.

The first of these measures was the creation of the Fascist militia, destined to become one of the characteristic features of the new Italy. The early development of Fascism was indissolubly bound up with the organization of the Fascist *squadre* or armed bands of volunteers formed to combat the criminal violence of the Communists and Socialists, who, indeed, had themselves already constituted their "Red Guards" on the Russian model. The action of the Fascist *squadre* was inspired by the principle of *vim vi repellere*, and were a spontaneous growth arising from the extremity of the danger to the country and from the exasperation produced among the best elements of Italy by the outrages and truculence of the Reds and the supine feebleness of the authorities. These *squadre*, composed of the bravest and most vigorous youths in the country, many of them ex-service men, were gradually organized and disciplined, usually under the command of ex-officers of the army with fine war records, until at the time of the March on Rome, they had assumed the aspect of regular military formations, for which General De Bono, the hero of Monte Grappa, but then on the retired list, was chiefly responsible. They wore the black shirt of the *Arditi* or assault battalions created in the latter period of the war, and many, but not all, also donned a uniform similar to that of the *Arditi*. In addition, there were the Nationalist *Sempre pronti* formations wearing blue shirts, the *Legionari fiumani* (remnants of D'Annunzio's forces at Fiume), and some groups of ex-

Arditi not yet incorporated in the Fascist *squadre*. The March on Rome was accomplished by the *squadristi* organized in several columns, most of them armed, and perfectly disciplined, and after Signor Mussolini had become Prime Minister they were immediately sent to their homes.

But the problem of how to deal with these irregular bands remained yet to be solved. With a Fascist Government in power there was no longer any necessity for irregular forces; indeed, their very existence seemed incompatible with the new *régime*. But to have disbanded them then and there would have been both impolitic and ungrateful towards the men who had risked their lives a hundred times for the national cause. Nor should it be forgotten that Communism and sedition were by no means wholly wiped out and might at any moment become a danger once more; even though the regular forces of the State were now under the orders of a Fascist Government, the Reds were so accustomed to feebleness and inaction on the part of the authorities that they were much less afraid of them than of the irregular bands, the mere presence of which was in itself a guarantee against attempted sedition. Moreover, irregular volunteer formations are by no means a novelty in Italian history, any more than in that of some other countries. The Risorgimento period is closely associated with such bodies, of which the most famous were the Garibaldian Red-Shirts, who played so important a part on the creation of Italian unity, and National Guards were formed in most parts of Italy in 1848 and 1859.

Signor Mussolini consequently adopted the original and brilliant solution of embodying the irregular *squadre* into the regular forces of the Crown. All the irregular formations were disbanded, but by the Royal Decree of December 14th, 1922, the *Milizia volontaria per la sicurezza nazionale* was created. This force was declared to be "at the service of God and of the Italian Fatherland," and on its formation it took its orders from the Head of the Government. Its functions are to assist the other armed forces of the State in the maintenance of public order and to prepare the citizens for the defence of Italian interests in the world—that is to say, it is entrusted with many police duties formerly performed by the army and with the duty of giving pre-military training to the youth of Italy. Its

total strength is about 190,000 men, recruited by voluntary enlistment; its members are unpaid, with the exception of some hundreds of officers on the permanent staff and a small number of men attached to the various commands; the others receive a subsistence allowance only when told off for duty outside their own place of residence. Most of the *militi* provide their own uniforms, while their arms, deposited in the barracks, are issued to them only when they are called out on duty. The immense majority of the men are only called out on exceptional occasions. The total budget of the Milizia amounts to 53,000,000 lire.

The members of the force were at first recruited from the old *squadristi*, and the officers appointed by Royal Decree on the proposal of the Ministers of the Interior and of War, but according to no particular rule, except that they must be persons possessing the requisite qualities of capacity and good moral character. But by a subsequent decree (August 4th, 1924) they must all be ex-officers of the fighting services, except the *capi-manipolo* (corresponding to lieutenants) who may be selected from the *capi-squadra* (N.C.O.s of the Milizia) or from civilians. The Milizia is under the command of a Commandant-General, and is divided into zones, legions, cohorts, *centurie* and *manipoli*, corresponding to the divisions of the army of ancient Rome; the names of the different ranks, too, are derived from those of Rome, and the Roman system of divisions by threes is likewise adopted. In war time the Milizia would be automatically absorbed into the regular army, but some auxiliary services might be entrusted to Milizia formations.

The Milizia has already rendered useful services, and although it has never yet been mobilized or called out to take action against revolutionary outbreaks, its mere existence has prevented such attempts from being made. At first it encountered much opposition, and it was feared in some quarters that it might become a sort of irresponsible prætorian guard. But these misgivings proved wholly unfounded, and the Milizia has become more and more absorbed into the regular forces of the State; by the terms of the above-quoted Decree its members take the oath of allegiance to the King, like the soldiers, seamen, and airmen. It is true that the Milizia is a party organization

and takes its orders from the Prime Minister, who is also the head of the Fascist party. But as the Prime Minister is the head of the Government, all the fighting services and the civil services are under his orders, even when he delegates his authority, as he does in many cases, to other Ministers, officers, and officials. The *Milizia* is merely one of the organs of the Fascist *régime* created to tide over the transition from the old order to the new.

The educational function of the *Milizia* is to train young men for military service. In the past this function was performed by a variety of organizations, not all of them efficient, whereas now it is entrusted exclusively to the *Milizia*. The force will also be entrusted with the task of keeping in training time-expired men who have already performed their military service.

Two or three special legions of volunteers have been raised for active service in Libya, where they formed part of the regular army and distinguished themselves in action. Other legions of a more permanent character were formed for the railways, the posts, the roads and the ports, composed of men already employed in those services and entrusted with the maintenance of order and discipline and the protection of the property of the State and the public. The results have been very satisfactory, as they have contributed to the efficiency of the services and have to a large extent eliminated the thefts which in the past went on to a scandalous extent, especially on the railways.¹ More recently new formations have been created for the protection of the woods and forests, where they were greatly needed, while others fulfil the functions of frontier guards, especially along the Alpine frontiers.

In all these various functions the particular task of the *Milizia* is analogous to that of the Fascist party as a whole with regard to the administration in general—viz., to impart vigour and efficiency to the public services and keep them up to the proper pitch, preventing any kind of slackness, insubordination, or slovenliness.

One of the most dangerous of the disruptive forces with which the new Government had to deal drastically was Freemasonry. It must not be forgotten that Italian and

¹ Compensation for thefts fell from 18,000,000 lire in 1922-1923 to 3,000,000 in 1924-1925.

French Freemasonry differ essentially from that of Anglo-Saxon countries; in Great Britain and America it has never assumed the same political character as in France and Italy. The sect originated in Great Britain, was transplanted into France and thence in the eighteenth century into Italy, but did not acquire at first any great importance. It began to spread and exercise influence in Italy during the Napoleonic invasion, and was made use of by Napoleon as a useful instrument of political domination. With the fall of the Empire Freemasonry rapidly decayed, and it only played an unimportant part during the Risorgimento period. New secret associations then arose of a Masonic character, but distinct from Freemasonry, such as the Carbonari and later the Giovane Italia of Mazzini, which did exercise considerable influence on the political events of the time. The revolutionary movements of 1820, 1821, and 1831 were essentially Carbonarist, while the Giovane Italia was important in the later agitations. According to Signor Alessandro Luzio, after 1815 Freemasonry was actually pro-Austrian, and the Imperial Government found among the Italian Freemasons some of its most useful, efficient, and ruthless instruments of persecution, especially in connection with the police services and the political trials. Men execrated by every patriotic Italian, such as the pitiless inquisitor Antonio Salvotti, the odious police official Bolza, the informer Castillia, and many others were Freemasons. There was at one time an open conflict between the Masons and the Carbonari, because the latter were religiously minded and invoked the blessing of Christ on their enterprises as the liberator of the oppressed, whereas the former were anti-religious. Mazzini was not a Mason, and strongly objected to the secrecy imposed by Freemasonry on its adepts, as well as to its anti-religious attitude. Ulisse Bacci, the apologist of Italian Freemasonry, states in his book *Il Massone italiano* that the organization could not play an important part in a national movement such as the Risorgimento, because it was cosmopolitan and international in its spirit.

In the course of the nineteenth century Freemasonry centred more and more in France, and the Italian branch was under the influence, if not the direct authority, of the French Grand Orient.

In one Italian political question Freemasonry took a definite line—in the conflict between the Church and the national cause. This conflict was, as we have seen, inevitable during the Risorgimento, as the unity of Italy could not be achieved save at the expense of the Temporal Power of the Papacy. Freemasonry being anti-Clerical, it supported the national movement as against Clerical opposition, and on this fact alone it bases its claim to be regarded in some sense as patriotically Italian. But as Signor Rocco points out,¹ this conflict is an Italian question, and it was unfortunate that it was embittered by the interference of foreign influences, such as those inspiring Freemasonry.

As long as Italy was divided and ruled by foreign and domestic tyrants the existence of secret societies was admissible, and even necessary; but once unity and independence had been achieved there was no longer any excuse for them. It was, however, after 1870 that Freemasonry assumed the widest development and importance in Italy. It did not, then, advocate any definite political programme, except anti-Clericalism and a vague support of Democratic ideals. It had no electoral platform, nor did any Cabinet ever professedly call itself Masonic. Its activities were, on the other hand, concentrated very largely on the public services and certain fields of business enterprise. Freemasons were found in all political parties and groups, but their action seldom had anything to do with the politics of those parties; their chief function was to promote the interests of the "brethren." Freemasonry came to be a huge mutual aid society, and an official who was a Mason could always count on the support of the *onorata società*, as it was ironically called,² even if he were incompetent, neglectful of his duties, or guilty of serious misconduct. Innumerable instances could be quoted to illustrate this point; the following is peculiarly significant. The late Professor Pasquale Villari was for some years a member of a board connected with the Ministry of Education, one of whose functions was to inquire into the conduct of professors and teachers charged with disciplinary offences, and propose disciplinary punishments on those who were found guilty. Among his colleagues were several Freemasons, mostly honourable and

¹ *La trasformazione dello Stato*, p. 56.

² This was the *argot* name given to the Camorra of Naples,

highly respected men; but whenever the person whose shortcomings were being examined by the board happened to be a Mason too, the Masonic members of the board either took up his defence systematically, regardless of the seriousness of his offence, or quietly withdrew before a decision was taken. "A brother cannot condemn a brother." A Masonic discipline and a distinct hierarchy had been evolved which, assisted by the secrecy of membership, exercised a most demoralizing effect on the whole civil service, and even extended to the judiciary and the fighting services. An official or an officer of high rank might be Masonically inferior to one of his own subordinates, and could not, therefore, exercise proper authority over him in service matters. It was almost impossible in certain departments for a Mason to be punished, however heinous his offence; while to be a Mason insured rapid promotion and other advantages for mediocrities over the heads of abler and better colleagues. Above all, the secrecy with which Freemasonry was surrounded opened the way to the most sordid intrigues which could be carried on with absolute impunity.

From a larger political point of view Freemasonry was a danger, inasmuch as it had never shaken off the fetters of its foreign affiliations, and there was always a strong suspicion that in all its political activities, especially at election time, it received instructions and guidance from abroad. At one election in Rome, in which the victorious candidate had notoriously enjoyed the support of the Masonic order, when the result was announced a demonstration of enthusiasm was immediately held before the French Embassy (M. Barrère was then Ambassador), as if to reassert the dependence of Italian Freemasonry on the Grand Orient of France.

For years a small group of political thinkers had attempted to promote a campaign against Freemasonry and its deleterious influence of the public services. In 1913 the *Idea Nazionale*, the organ of the Nationalist Party, had opened its columns to a referendum on the subject among its readers, and large numbers of the ablest minds and the highest characters in Italy had sent in their views vigorously denouncing Masonic intrigue. But it was impossible to obtain any practical results from such manifestations of

opinion, as the order was too strongly entrenched in every department of Italian life. The Socialists had tried to condemn Freemasonry, and at the Congress of Ancona in 1913 a resolution proposed by Mussolini had declared Freemasonry incompatible with Socialism, but half the leaders of the party were Masons, and continued to remain in the order because it entailed practical advantages such as Socialism was not always able to secure for its adepts. No Cabinet dared attempt action against the order, because if it had done so it would have been upset within forty-eight hours.

It was left to the Fascists to tackle the many-headed monster. At first not a few Fascists were themselves Masons; but as early as 1923 a declaration of incompatibility between Fascism and Freemasonry was issued officially,¹ and while the great majority of the Fascists who were Masons renounced the latter quality, a few, including General Capello, afterwards condemned to thirty years' imprisonment for complicity in Zaniboni's attempt to murder the Prime Minister, resigned from the Fascist party and remained Masons. The order, which had at first maintained an attitude of doubtful neutrality towards Fascism, now openly joined the Opposition, and although there was a split among the Masons, one wing of whom, known as the Masons of the Piazza del Gesù, as distinguished from those of the Palazzo Giustiniani (from their respective headquarters)² there is no doubt that all the Masons were more or less anti-Fascist. This was not merely on account of the conciliatory attitude of the new *régime* towards the Church and the Vatican, but, above all, because of the rigid discipline which it introduced into the administration and its strongly national policy intolerant of foreign interference, as well as of its openly expressed contempt for the catchwords of Democracy.

At the Zaniboni trial for the attempt on Signor Mussolini's life, apart from General Capello's complicity, the order as a whole was deeply involved as having financed the

¹ This resolution was proposed by Mussolini.

² Just as the Governments of the various Powers are described in certain newspapers as "Downing Street," the "Quai d'Orsay," the "Palazzo Chigi," the "Wilhelmstrasse," the "Ballhausplatz," etc.

conspiracy. Complicity between the leaders of the order and the men plotting in France to overthrow the Fascist Government also came to light (some curious details in this connection were published in Gino Piastra's *Memorie di un illuso*). The Grand Master of the Order in Italy, Signor Domizio Torrigiani, was involved in both affairs, but was dealt with very leniently, being only condemned to the *confino* for five years.

Early in 1925 a Bill on secret societies, by which, of course, Freemasonry was intended, was submitted to Parliament and became law. The measure consists of two articles only. The first empowers the police authorities to demand of the executives of all societies, institutions, and other bodies operating in Italy their acts of foundation, the statutes and standing orders, and the list of their members and officers, and enjoins on the said executives the duty of supplying the information. This clause does away with the secrecy with which Freemasonry surrounded itself and deprives it of the chief means of influence. Article 2 provides that, should such secret societies continue to exist, any official of the Government or other public body, judge, or officer of the fighting services who should be proved to belong to them shall be liable to disciplinary punishments. Subsequently it was enjoined on all such persons to declare on oath whether they belonged or ever had belonged to any secret society. Later, when the definitely seditious activities of the order came to light, it was finally dissolved by Government decree. This action against Freemasonry was one of self-defence. Had the Freemasons complied with the law, come into the light and abstained from sedition, they might have continued to exist and carry on their legitimate activities, if there were any. But as they chose to take the opposite course, they have had to suffer the consequences.

It has been alleged that this drastic policy has not attained its object, that Freemasonry continues to exist in secret, and that there are still Masons among the Fascists. It is quite possible that a certain number of persons, including some officials, still consider themselves Freemasons and bound by the rules of the order. But the mere fact that they have nothing to gain and much to lose by belonging to it, and that membership no longer secures illicit privi-

leges over non-Masons nor exercises any influence outside the law, is bound to reduce them to a mere handful and to render them impotent for evil.

Another measure for the defence of the State is the law on the civil services. During the preceding decades the civil services in Italy had acquired ever-increasing importance, and while on the one hand the honesty of the personnel has almost always been above suspicion and the great majority of the officials work hard and devotedly on very inadequate pay, there was a minority, who although seldom actually dishonest—such cases have been extremely rare—neglected their duties and tried to avail themselves of political connections, Freemasonry, and local influence to obtain exceptional advantages. In the Government departments Ministers and Under-Secretaries were simply overwhelmed with recommendations from deputies in favour of this or that official. As we have seen, some civil servants so far forgot their oath of allegiance to the Crown and their duty to the State as to plot openly or in secret against the existing institutions. Those who joined the Socialist ranks and other seditious organizations were by no means handicapped in their careers; on the contrary they were often exceptionally favoured because the Socialist deputies usually had a pull with the Government. One official, now dead, succeeded in making a very satisfactory career, in spite of quite exceptional incompetence, because (a) he was a Mason, (b) he enjoyed the friendship of certain Socialist deputies, and (c) he had a brother who was a Monsignore of high rank at the Vatican! Other officials were devoted to this or that political leader, and when he was out of office they intrigued against his successor in order to encompass his fall and bring their protector back into power. Not a few Cabinet crises have been brought about in this way. Signor Giolitti was a pastmaster in the art of securing and organizing the support of large masses of civil servants, especially those of the Ministry of the Interior, to whom he was always "*the Minister*," whether he were in office or not. A favoured official would be given overtime work, usually not performed but involving extra pay, special missions which were either unnecessary or might have been better carried out by some other man, or be appointed a member of one or more committees which

he seldom attended, although he was entitled to draw *gettoni di presenza*. When Baron Sonnino became Prime Minister he at once proceeded to do away with these irregularities, and consequently made himself very unpopular with a section of the civil service, a fact which proved one of the causes of the short duration of both his Cabinets.

There have even been strikes of civil servants, when their demands for higher pay, justified or otherwise, had not been immediately complied with. It has happened that an unpopular Minister has been boo'ed and hissed in his own Ministry by the members of his staff, and in other cases the work of the office has been systematically held up, to the detriment of the service. A Minister responsible to the Crown, Parliament, and the nation could not always count on being able to carry out a policy which he believed to be right and beneficial to the people, simply because he was let down by the bureaucracy. During the immediate post-war years the seditious activities of a minority of the officials, tolerated by the Government, reached unheard-of proportions.

When the Fascist Government came into power it undertook the Herculean task of reforming the civil service. This involved a reduction of many staffs, the suppression of useless offices and committees, and the doing away with innumerable abuses. The task is not yet finally accomplished, and there still remains much to be done, many services to be simplified, and still further reductions to be effected. But the right path is being followed. The great majority of the officials loyally supported the Government in its reforms, and did much to carry them out. But there was an irreconcilable minority incapable of adapting itself to the idea that the old-time system of privileges and tolerated inefficiency was over, that the new brooms were sweeping vigorously, and that the comfortable easy-going life of dressing-gown and carpet-slippers must give way to new methods of iron discipline and strenuous efficiency. Some of them believed that the new order was but a temporary phase, and that Giolitti, Nitti, or some other politician of the old school would soon return and replace things as they were, or that Treves, Turati or Bombacci might come into power with a Socialist Ministry (vested interests not to be interfered with), or even that there

might be "des accommodements avec le ciel," and that Fascism would end by shedding its uncomfortable innovations and drift back into the old habits. These men kept in touch with the anti-Fascist groups, placed hindrances in the way of every Government measure distasteful to themselves or involving harder work and stricter discipline, and conducted an underhand campaign of defeatist propaganda calculated to prove detrimental to Fascism. Civil servants are so carefully protected by the law against wrongful dismissal or even minor disciplinary penalties that they have every security against injustice. Besides innumerable administrative appeals, they can also have recourse in the last instance to the Fourth Section of the Council of State, a regular court of administrative justice. Consequently it is very difficult to inflict punishment on an official except in the case of the most flagrant offences. Political seditious action, such as that described above, was almost impossible to deal with, even when it is more injurious to the public interest than any mere disciplinary misdemeanour.

The Fascist Government at first made no changes in the laws and regulations affecting the civil service, and, unlike other revolutionary Governments, did not dismiss any officials, although some were notoriously hostile to it. A few vacancies in the posts of prefects and directors-general of the various Ministries, which have an essentially political character and have even in the past been filled by outsiders, were conferred on prominent Fascists who had rendered important services to the party, but their number was limited. Later on several posts in the consular service were likewise conferred on Fascists who were not members of it. But there was a special reason for this policy—that of bringing the Italian communities abroad into closer touch with the Fascist *régime* than was possible where the consul was an official who had spent his whole career abroad and served under Governments whose attitude differed radically from that of the present *régime*. Nor did the measure prove detrimental to the interests of the regular officials, as the number of consular posts was increased, so as to do away as far as possible with the honorary non-career consuls, often foreigners.

Later, when the Opposition was trying by every means to overthrow the Government, it mobilized all its sym-

pathizers in the civil service for the purpose. It was for this reason that a new law was enacted empowering the Government to dismiss officials who proved flagrantly unfaithful in the performance of their duties and who by their political conduct showed themselves irreconcilably hostile to the *régime*. One of Signor Mussolini's predecessors had adopted a similar measure whereby an official could be dismissed for *scarso rendimento* (because his work was inadequately productive), but this formula lent itself to abuses and unfairness. The new law, as Signor Rocco says, is of a political nature; it is "a measure which aims at establishing that spiritual harmony between the civil servant and the Government, without which the loyalty of the former is a pharisaical loyalty."¹ In other words, it is not the business of a civil servant to decide whether a particular Government measure is good or bad. Whatever he may think of it, it is his duty to carry it out loyally and faithfully. If he regards it as so abominable that he cannot conscientiously do so, he should resign, or ask to be transferred to another department; if he does not do so he must obey the orders of his superiors without question. The political character of the measure is indeed a guarantee for the civil servant, for it is not his business to be a politician.

The measure is, moreover, of a temporary nature, and is to remain in force for five years only, so as to tide over the transition from the old order to the new. It does not oblige all officials to become Fascists; many of the highest officials are, in fact, not Fascists. But the law imposes on all officials the duty of abstaining from anti-Fascist action and propaganda. Had there been in Italy, as there are in Great Britain, regulations and traditions precluding civil servants from taking any part at all in party politics, the present measure would never have been necessary.

At the debate in the Chamber on the Bill, Signor Rocco, the Minister of Justice, described what other Governments had done in this connection. We have seen how Signor Giolitti had filled the higher posts in the civil service with men enjoying his personal confidence and who were devoted not to a party or a principle but to a man. In France, when Emile Combes was Premier he obliged all officials and even officers to accept and carry out his narrow, intolerant, anti-

¹ *La trasformazione dello Stato*, p. 81.

Clerical and pro-Masonic policy, and by the system of *fiches de délation* which he introduced any official or officer who attended Mass or whose family did so was liable to penalties ranging from retarded promotion to dismissal. The American spoils system is too well known to require comment. In the immediate post-Risorgimento period in Italy (the more one studies the Risorgimento the better one understands Fascism) the Government of the new Italian Kingdom found it necessary to get rid of a number of officials and professors and teachers whose devotion to the past *régimes* rendered their presence under the new impossible.

In actual practice the law has found application in very few cases. Of the many hundreds of officials of the Ministry of Justice only seventeen have been placed on the retired list, all of them guilty of seditious political activity incompatible with their duties. Of the numerous class of University professors, two have been dismissed, one of whom had, indeed, actually resigned his appointment, so that the Minister of Education merely refused to accept his resignation and decreed his dismissal. In other departments the law has been applied with equal parsimony, and in many not a single official has been dismissed or forced to retire under its provisions. Nor should it be forgotten that, except in the very rare cases of dismissal, the officials in question have been merely placed on the retired list some few years before the time when this would have been done normally, and with a larger pension than that to which they would have been otherwise entitled. In the fighting services no measure of the kind has been necessary, because Italian officers have never taken any part in politics, either under the present *régime* or before, ever since the foundation of the Kingdom.

A more rigorous aspect of the Fascist determination to protect the State against all the assaults of its enemies is the measure entitled the Law for the Defence of the State of November, 1926. We must not forget that it was enacted after no less than four attempts had been made on Signor Mussolini's life, to say nothing of sundry plots to overthrow the existing institutions, engineered by groups of extremists or disgruntled politicians disappointed that under the new dispensation they no longer enjoyed the

privileges of yore. There had already been considerable pressure on the part of public opinion, both Fascist and pro-Fascist, in favour of greater rigour in dealing with political crime. After the last attempt on the Prime Minister's life at Bologna in October, 1926, the demand became ever more insistent. As Signor Rocco states, "existing legislation had proved inadequate not only to prevent such crimes, but even to satisfy public opinion by means of rapid and severe punishment to be inflicted for crimes already committed. It seems clear from many signs that if the State does not intervene to prevent and repress effectively, the spontaneous initiative of private citizens will take its place, seriously encroaching on the majesty of the law and the sovereignty of the State."¹ The lynching by the crowd at Bologna of the youth who attempted to murder Signor Mussolini bears out this view, and so does the Florence episode of October, 1925, when after the murder of a popular Fascist leader three anti-Fascists were murdered by way of reprisal.

The chief innovation in the new law consists in the introduction of the death penalty for attempts on the life of the King, the heir to the Throne, and the Prime Minister, and for certain other crimes against the security of the State, such as attempts against the independence and unity of the Kingdom (formerly provided for in Article 104 of the Criminal Code), violation of secrets concerning the security of the State (Articles 107 and 108 of the same code), attempts against internal peace—*i.e.*, acts calculated to promote the armed insurrection of the people against the authorities of the State, to promote civil war, devastation, pillage, or massacre in any part of the Kingdom (Articles 120 and 252). The death penalty had existed in Italy for certain heinous forms of crime, but had been abolished as a result of the pressure of the sentimentalists, who showed more sympathy for the most odious criminals than for their victims. In the new Criminal Code the death penalty is re-introduced for other crimes than those dealt with by the Law for the Defence of the State.

Other clauses of the new law inflict varying terms of imprisonment on the authors of plots to commit the crimes

¹ *Ibid*, p. 100.

mentioned above, the criminal activities of seditious organizations (especially those of the Communists and Anarchists), the reconstitution of associations dissolved by order of the authorities and propaganda of their doctrines and methods of action. With Article 5 imposing penalties on the anti-patriotic activities of Italians living abroad I shall deal subsequently.

The law was not made retroactive, as many of the more uncompromising Fascist demanded, but the venue of political offences, including those committed before the enactment of the law, was changed from the ordinary tribunals and courts of assize to a special court presided over by a general and composed of officers of the fighting services and the *Milizia nazionale* who have had a legal training; the *relatore* and the public prosecutor are members of the judiciary, and the accused are defended by professional lawyers. The court was created largely on account of the slowness of the procedure of the ordinary courts, even in cases where rapid repression was necessary. The regular procedure is, however, being speeded up in all the courts, and cases are now tried and punishment inflicted sometimes within a month of the commission of the crime. The code of criminal procedure is being also reformed in the same sense. When the new codes come into operation some of the reasons for setting up the special tribunal will no longer exist, and its activities will consequently be more limited, until in 1931 it automatically ceases to exist. The principal cases tried by the tribunal are those of the persons who attempted to murder Signor Mussolini; they were tried under the old law and were punished according to its provisions, the chief authors receiving sentences of thirty years' imprisonment. Subsequently a number of Communists and Anarchists accused of seditious activities and attempts to promote civil war and armed risings, the reconstitution of the dissolved Communist organization, etc., were tried, and many of them condemned to imprisonment for varying terms of years. The sentences have been undoubtedly severe, but to those who profess disapproval for the rigorous repression of political offences, I cannot give a better reply than the words of a highly distinguished Italian jurist of the old school, Baron Raffaele Garofalo. "There exists," he writes, "in the modern world a new species of

political crime, aiming at the overthrow of society from its foundations, by means of the expropriation and extermination of the so-called bourgeois and intellectual classes, with the object of an artificial and radical economic transformation of society. It is the propaganda of integral Communism, which the devotees of the Liberal theory honoured by regarding it as a political party, and admitting it to the legislative chambers. This was a grave error of the democracies in the Neo-Latin nations, an error which may be disastrous to European civilization. Logically, if Communism is a political party, Anarchy should also be regarded as such, and likewise any band of malefactors." The Liberal mentality has not, he adds, got beyond the period of the Parliamentary struggles between Conservatives and Progressives. "But to-day we are face to face with something very different. It is a whirlwind from the East of Europe which is approaching, and threatens to destroy the life of all the Western nations. Bolshevism tends to the destruction of all the institutions which honour our contemporary civilization and are the heritage to a large extent of the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations. . . . Civilized society is consequently in full battle against a new form of imminent barbarism. It is folly to come to terms with such destructive forces, and even to tolerate the constant work of suggestion of the seditious Press. Every Government must consider it its first duty to prevent the easy victory of vulgar tribunes preaching to ignorant persons filled with hope for a better future which they falsely promise them. That propaganda is the real political crime of the present age. Not to tolerate it is a condition of life for society."¹

Another measure enacted by the Fascist Government was directed against Italians residing abroad and plotting against the State from beyond the frontier, generally known as the *Fuorusciti*. The phenomenon of *Fuoruscitismo* is no new one in Italy. It is an historical heritage dating from the earliest Middle Ages, and going back, indeed, much farther to the days when

"Lars Porsenna of Clusium by the nine gods he swore
That the proud House of Tarquin should suffer wrong no more."

¹ *Nuova Antologia*, May 1, 1928.

In the Italian city republics party feeling was so bitter that whenever a particular faction happened to be in power its opponents not only left the city, voluntarily or as exiles, but immediately proceeded to plot with foreign Powers enemies of their own city in order to secure their support to overthrow the existing *régime* and get themselves back into power. They had no scruples in appealing for the intervention of foreign arms in their internal quarrels. Dante's *Divina Commedia* is full of instances of such action. This tendency resulted in the rapid decline of those brilliant communities and their easy conquest by foreign foes or by domestic tyrants supported by foreign arms. Among the Venetians alone was such conduct very rare, and consequently their republic outlasted all the others.

In later days we find further evidences of this tendency. After the Naples revolution of 1820, Ferdinand IV. called in the Austrians to reinstate him on his throne and enable him to break his oath to the people. The Austrians restored the Papal Government in the Romagna in 1831, Pius IX. called in the French and the Spaniards to overthrow the Roman Republic and drive out Garibaldi in 1849, and even the mild Grand Duke Leopold II. of Tuscany was only able to return to Florence after 1849 under an escort of Austrian bayonets. After the fall of the Bourbons of Naples in 1860 the deposed dynasty and its supporters plotted in Papal territory against the new Government, and invoked not without success foreign assistance to organize a campaign of counter-revolution based on assassination, pillage, and brigandage. The Liberal statesmen of the Italian Kingdom found it necessary to enact stringent measures, such as the Pica law, to safeguard the new *régime* against Bourbon intrigues and conspiracies, while the ruthlessly repressive measures adopted by the Italian generals and officials in the ex-Kingdom of Naples in the anti-brigandage campaign of 1861-1865—drum-head courts-martial and numerous executions both of brigands and of those who fed and sheltered them—ended by stamping out the pest. The Bourbon sympathizers found asylum not only in the Papal States, but also in France, and in both countries they recruited volunteers of many nationalities for the "crusade" in favour of Legitimacy. Many men of high character were taken in by this propaganda and entered Italian territory,

where they found themselves associated not with political idealists and single-hearted supporters of the exiled Bourbons, but with criminals of the most infamous character whose only objects were plunder, rape, and murder. Some of them, such as the Spaniard Borjès and sundry French and Belgian noblemen, would willingly have withdrawn from these enterprises, so different from what they in their childlike innocence had been led to expect.

After 1870 the extreme Clericals relied on French or Austrian assistance to restore the Temporal Power of the Pope, while the anti-Clericals, Freemasons, and Democrats appealed to the Democratic and Republican parties in France and even to the French Government, when it was under anti-Clerical influences, for assistance and encouragement in their political campaigns in Italy. At different times both groups secured what they wanted, although it did not enable them to achieve their ends. One might quote similar instances in the history of other countries, of which perhaps the most striking is that of the English and Scotch Jacobites when they secured help in France and Spain.

After the advent of Fascism a number of the more irreconcilable anti-Fascists, either because they found things uncomfortable in Italy or because they preferred other countries to their own country, settled abroad, mostly in France, and with the help and encouragement of certain French organizations and parties, as well as that of the Russian Bolsheviks, intrigued to upset the Fascist *régime*. Some of their attempts were quite childish in their ingenuousness, although others were rather more dangerous. In certain cases, such as that of the so-called "Prestito della Libertà," raised among the opponents of Fascism to finance an anti-Fascist revolution, the funds collected were quietly pocketed by a few of the leaders without any attempt to carry out the programme. Many curious details of this affair are told in Gino Piastra's book.¹ In the South of France an anti-Fascist bank was created nominally to advance credit to Italian agricultural immigrants, but in reality to promote an anti-Fascist campaign. Unfortunately for those who put their trust (and their savings) in it, it ended in a suspicious bankruptcy.

¹ *Le memorie di un illuso.*

The measure adopted by the Italian Government against the *Fuorusciti* took the form of an amendment to the law on citizenship of 1912; to the causes of loss of citizenship contained in that law were added the deeds of Italian citizens who in foreign countries acted in a manner detrimental to the interests of the nation. These actions are those whence a disturbance of public order in Italy, injury to Italy's good name and prestige or to the national credit, may ensue. Persons guilty of such actions are liable to be deprived of their citizenship, or in graver cases to have their property placed under sequester or confiscated. This measure was regarded in Democratic circles as inexpressibly wicked. But few will deny that the individuals coming under its provisions were despicable and unworthy of the sympathy of honest and patriotic citizens in any country. In normal times it would have been unnecessary to take action against them, and they might have been ignored, as Great Britain ignored the fatuous and contemptible Houston Stewart Chamberlain. But the Fascist revolution was not a normal epoch. The men involved in these offences were associated with the worst phases of Italian political life; some had been traitors to their country during the war, others implicated in criminal revolutionary action after the war, and others had throughout their career been inspired long before Fascism existed by the single passion of loathing for their own country. In any case the total number of persons deprived of citizenship was very small—fifteen to be precise—and for some years past no new names were added to the list.

Finally we have the *confino*. By the terms of this law individuals committing certain actions may be assigned to the *confino di polizia*—i.e., obliged to reside for a certain period of time, extending to a maximum of five years, but often limited to a year or two, or even to a few months, and subject to subsequent reductions, in a particular place. While residing there they are free to move about and attend to any occupation they may choose, and if they are indigent they receive a daily allowance. The places selected are not, as has been stated in the foreign Press, desert rocks, but thickly populated islands with large villages on them, inhabited by a numerous stable population, dwelling there of its own free will. The political offenders are *con-*

finati in the islands of Ponza and Lipari, which are generally considered to be among the most beautiful spots in Italy, and their families may reside with them.

Even the correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, who wrote an article about the *confino*, failed to paint a very lurid picture of the conditions of the *confinati*.

The persons to whom this punishment has been applied are of two categories, (a) persons whose political activity has been persistently directed against the Fascist *régime*, and (b) those guilty of actions which, without being legally crimes, are grossly immoral and calculated to cause injury to the community. In the second group, which is about four times more numerous than the first, are comprised *souteneurs* and others living on the earnings of prostitutes, moneylenders of the class which is a curse to Naples and other towns of the South, battenning as they do on the very poor, from whom they extort interest on small loans at the rate of 200 and 300 per cent. a month, landlords refusing to abide by the Rent Restriction Acts, and taking advantage of the needy, and certain other individuals of the same moral stature. The temporary seclusion of such persons can hardly be regarded as a drawback in the interests of the community. One may perhaps criticize the arbitrary manner in condemning persons to the *confino*, not by a regular court of law as the result of a sentence, but by a commission composed of the prefect of the province and officials and judges. But this again is a temporary measure and is applied with considerable care and leniency. Appeals may be made to the Prime Minister, who has already rescinded in a large number of political cases the decisions of the provincial commissions, or granted pardons after a short part of the sentence had been served.¹ This measure, like the others described, is part of the general policy necessary during the period of transition of the whole body politic from the old *régime* to the new. In such a transformation it is inevitable that some harsh measures should be enacted, and that some individuals should suffer hardship. But the events preceding the March on Rome rendered this transformation inevitable and necessary, and during the process the drawbacks must be accepted as part

¹ Very few of the "politicals" sent to the *confino* on the enactment of the law are still detained.

of the price paid for the greatest good of the greatest number.

The dramatic and successful campaign against the Mafia in Sicily must also be considered in the same light. The Mafia existed and flourished because the political conditions of the day made it possible. The Government needed the support of the Mafia for electoral purposes, as that criminal association was the only efficient organization in the island and dominated a large part of the inhabitants. Only with the help of the Mafia could the return of Ministerial candidates be secured in many constituencies. Consequently the prefects and the police could never proceed with proper energy in the pursuit of crimes of which the authors were Mafiosi or enjoyed the protection of the Mafia. Life and property were not safe in many parts of the island, and in spite of the good will shown by certain officials, it seemed as if the pest could never be eradicated, all the more so as it was almost impossible to secure evidence, the witnesses being terrorized by the threats of the Mafiosi. It was not until the present Government came into power that a vigorous campaign against the Mafia was undertaken. The Prefect of Palermo, the now famous Signor Mori, was given full powers to act; he did not have to consider the desires and interests of this or that deputy, of the mayor of this town, of a *grande elettore* of that, nor need he trouble about the next elections. Above all, he knew that he would not be let down by his superiors in Rome. In a few months one stronghold of the Mafia after another was cleared out, hundreds of criminals were arrested, and witnesses were at last forthcoming ready to give evidence in court as well as *in camera*. The first great trial took place in Sicily before a Sicilian jury, and nearly a hundred and fifty criminals were condemned to long terms of imprisonment. The campaign is continuing, and more and more criminals are brought to justice, some for crimes committed many years ago. This policy naturally has caused a great deal of dissatisfaction in the criminal underworld, and among the relatives of the criminals; but it has produced the widest satisfaction in the great majority of the population, who at last feel safe to go about the country and know that murder and robbery can no longer be committed with impunity.

The anti-Mafia campaign greatly enhanced the prestige of the Fascist Government, even in circles who do not sympathize with Fascism. But it must be remembered that only a Fascist Government could have achieved such a success, and that the campaign is part of its general policy for the moral as well as the material improvement of the country.

XII

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

IN spite of the profoundly unsatisfactory political situation, both internal and external, consequent on the lack of political education as well as on an unfavourable international position, and in spite of very serious natural handicaps, Italy before the war was beginning to develop economically in many directions, some of them quite unexpected and surprising. Progress was by no means uniform in all branches of economic activity, nor in all parts of the country. It was more rapid and intense in industry, which, until the latter part of the nineteenth century, had been very backward, than in agriculture, where some advance had already been made, and in the North, both agriculturally and industrially, rather than in the South.

The economic policy of the Government had not always been consistent, and did not appear to have any very definite purpose, alternating between opposing tendencies according to the political and economic conditions of the moment. This was due partly to the transformation of the governing class and partly to the general political situation. With the advent of the Left to power in 1876, the class of professional politicians unattached to any set of principles became more prominent. These men regarded politics, especially Parliamentary politics, as the sole object of their existence and of the activity of the Government. Measures of an economic nature calculated to improve the conditions of the nation as a whole were considered almost exclusively from the point of view of their effect on the political situation of the Cabinet or the electoral situation of a particular deputy or province, or of the general situation of this or that party or group in the Chamber at the next elections, and even well-intentioned and competent statesmen found their best efforts handicapped by their political necessities. A measure would find support or encounter opposition in the political

world without much consideration for its possible effects on the general well-being.

The result was a great deal of unnecessary extravagance in the matter of public works and of irregularity in their distribution. Many expensive railways were built, not because they were really needed, but because they passed through the constituency of some prominent political man. Thus the loopline from Genoa to Asti was universally known as the "linea Genova-Saracco¹-Asti." Other more necessary works were neglected or carried out very slowly because they were not pushed forward by any influential personage, while others, again, although useful in themselves, were carried out without any organic plan, isolated sections being completed but rendered useless because the connecting links were missing.

But progress was achieved, usually as the result of individual effort and enterprise; sometimes the Government did extend practical assistance and encouragement, but often its intervention proved actually a handicap, and success was only secured in spite of official obstruction or inopportune intervention. The average business man acquired a contempt for the Government and all its works, a contempt shared also by the average citizen not in business.

It is essential to remember that Italy always has been a predominantly agricultural country, and that even to-day, in spite of the remarkable development of industry, considerably more than half the population lives by agriculture, and that from three-quarters to four-fifths of its food supply is produced in Italy.

In agriculture useful work was accomplished through the great land reclamation schemes. The area about the mouths of the Po in the provinces of Ferrara, Ravenna, Forlì, and Rovigo, and practically the whole of Emilia and Romagna, once to a large extent a vast malarious marsh, has been gradually drained and reclaimed, and those provinces have come to be the richest wheat-bearing area in Italy, rivalling the most progressive countries of Northern and Central Europe and the United States, both in productivity and

¹ Saracco was a worthy political man of no great eminence who had been Premier from June, 1900, to February, 1901, and the line ran through his constituency.

in the excellence of the agricultural methods introduced. Similar undertakings were also carried out in Lombardy, Venetia, and Piedmont, although there a certain amount of progress had already been attained before. Cattle raising had made great advances, and so, too, did the production of milk, butter, and cheese, by means of artificially irrigated fields yielding seven to ten crops of fodder a year. In Tuscany agricultural methods were somewhat more old-fashioned, but excellent in their way, and the system of land tenure, based on the *mezzadria* (the division of the produce into equal parts between landlord and tenant, who are regarded as partners in the business), is one of the most satisfactory in the world, especially in the areas where mixed farming is the rule. Men like Baron Bettino Ricasoli did much to promote the success of Tuscan agriculture, and even the Tuscan Maremma, a wide, marshy district along the sea coast of the provinces of Grosseto and Pisa, was reclaimed like the Po area, until to-day only the extreme south of the Grosseto province remains swampy and retains the poetic picturesqueness of old.

In the province of Rome progress was much slower, and although the Campagna is being reclaimed at last, parts of it, especially those tracts along the coast, are still almost uncultivated and used only as grazing land for cattle, which are never put into stables. The same is true of the Pontine Marshes, which a succession of Popes in vain attempted to drain, and only to-day is the work being started on a systematic and scientific basis. In Southern Italy agricultural and social conditions were more backward still, but that area constitutes such a special problem that it will be dealt with in a separate section of this chapter.

The actual measure of progress achieved may be gauged from a few figures. The wheat crop, which in 1861 amounted to 25,000,000 quintals (including the provinces annexed in 1866 and 1871, but not those acquired in 1918, which, however, produce very little wheat), had grown to an average of 45,000,000 in 1909-1913; Indian corn had increased in the same period from 13,700,000 quintals to 25,000,000, and other crops had made similar progress. The sugar-beet crop, which in 1861 did not exist at all, had grown by 1909-1913 to an annual average of 18,000,000 quintals. Another indication of progress was the increasing

use of artificial fertilizers, which at the time of the Risorgimento were almost unknown, whereas in 1913 13,207,000 quintals were consumed.

The rise of Italian industry is one of the most remarkable phenomena of modern times. It has been made possible by the use of hydro-electric power, as Italy possesses no mineral fuel, except a certain amount of lignite and a very small quantity of mineral oil; all the rest has to be imported from abroad, thereby contributing largely to Italy's unfavourable trade balance. The first central electric power station in Italy, and, indeed, in Europe, was that of Milan, erected in 1883 to light the centre of the city, and the first long-distance trunk line for transmitting power was that between Tivoli and Rome dating from 1892, covering a distance of 25 kilometres and transmitting 2,000 horsepower; the power was derived from the falls of the Aniene at Tivoli,

“ . . . the green steep
Whence Anio leaps
In floods of snow-white foam.”

The discoveries of Italian electrical experts, such as Galileo Ferraris and Pacinotti, the enterprise and courage of numerous Italian manufacturers and engineers, and the intelligence and industry of the skilled workers made electrical development on a large scale possible. The waterfalls of the Alps and of Terni in Umbria, after those of Tivoli, were utilized as soon as it was found possible to transmit power over long distances. But soon many other minor watercourses were harnessed and converted into light and power to be applied to innumerable uses. The rapid advance made by electricity may be realized from the following figures: Before the war the total amount generated had risen in thirty years from little or nothing to 2,000,000,000 kilowatt-hours, and the capital invested in these undertakings from 45,000,000 lire in 1897 to 600,000,000 in 1914.

Electricity began to replace the use of coal in many industries, and has enabled Italy to develop her manufactures without increasing her coal imports; these amounted before the war to about 10,000,000 or 12,000,000 tons per annum, but would have been far larger without hydro-electric development. Later the water of a number of

streams which are almost dry in summer began to be collected in artificial basins so as to be available all the year round, although this development did not assume great importance until quite recent years. Some rivers have been diverted into new channels so as to secure a sudden drop, as in the case of the Volturno, whence Naples draws part of its electric power.

Electricity has been applied to a variety of purposes besides lighting and tramways, particularly to the textile and mechanical industries and to a large number of small workshops. Before the war it had not been utilized to any great extent for railway traction, except in the case of the Simplon Tunnel (1906) and the Monza-Sondrio line. The textile industries have developed on an unprecedented scale, almost entirely thanks to hydro-electric power. The capital invested in them in 1897 was only 95,000,000 lire; by 1914 it had risen to 478,000,000. The cotton industry is highly developed in many parts of Italy, but more particularly in Lombardy, Piedmont, parts of the Veneto, and at Naples. The silk industry, which is much older, flourishes in Lombardy, the Veneto, Tuscany, and parts of the South. Woollens are manufactured in the Biella area (Piedmont), at Schio in the Veneto, and at Prato in Tuscany. The metallurgical industries have also made considerable progress, but owing to the overwhelming importance which raw materials imported from abroad play in them, they could only achieve a measure of prosperity through high tariff protection. Important plants arose in Lombardy, Piedmont, Liguria, the island of Elba, Piombino, Terni, and Naples. The amount of iron produced in 1913 was close on 1,000,000 tons. There was a good deal of opposition to this development, which Free Traders regarded as unnatural and as the cause of high prices of iron and steel. But owing to the lack of coal and the scarcity of iron ore, some measure of protection was needed for an industry which might one day become indispensable. The war was to prove the truth of this contention. The mechanical and engineering industries were able to achieve greater progress in more natural conditions, as their development was more dependent on mechanical skill than on raw materials. Turin, where the Fiat works arose, became a world centre for the automobile industry, and

other plants were erected elsewhere. The mechanical workshops of the Tosi firm at Legnano, those of the Breda firm at Milan, and many others, acquired a high degree of perfection and prosperity. Italian motor-cars, machinery, and electrical material found its way all over the world, and even the great turbines at Niagara Falls were the product of an Italian firm. The Pirelli rubber and electric cable works also secured a world-wide reputation.

While the purely industrialized working class increased rapidly, the artisans also remained very numerous, and in almost all parts of Italy small hand industries still flourished and were given a new lease of life by the dissemination of electric power on the one hand, and by the activities of artistic organizations which spared no pains to revive the old handicrafts and the fine old designs and models on the other. Venetian glass of great artistic beauty continued to be produced as it had been in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, but with more modern methods.

The railway system expanded rapidly, although it had to make much headway, from the 1,758 kilometres of 1861. The same may be said of shipping, which was in its infancy in 1861, whereas in 1914 its total tonnage was 876,885. But the majority of the passenger steamers, none of them as large as the largest British or German boats, were used chiefly for emigrant traffic to North and South America, and very little effort was made to cater for the cabin passenger trade. Lines to Egypt, North Africa, the Levant, etc., were established, with occasional services to India and the Far East. A large percentage of Italy's emigrant and goods traffic was still conveyed in foreign bottoms, while Italian ships hardly did any foreign business. Genoa had become the chief port in the Mediterranean, its total trade surpassing that of Marseilles, and Naples was the largest emigration port in Europe. Venice, Leghorn, Palermo, Messina, and Bari also advanced.

As we have seen, the population had risen from 25,000,000 in 1861 to 35,000,000 in 1911. Some of the cities had increased owing to the development of industry and trade, but Rome had grown only because of the concentration of the bureaucracy, and Naples, poor in itself, because it attracted masses of migrants from the still poorer districts of the South. Certain areas, including Piedmont,

showed practically no increase, and in the Basilicata the population had actually diminished owing to intense emigration.

Economic conditions had thus undoubtedly improved generally. Wages had gone up, but more in the North than in the South; food was more abundant and of better quality than in the previous decades; bread and vegetables took the place of polenta, the consumption of meat, formerly almost unknown among the working classes, and that of sugar, coffee, wine, etc., increased. Housing improved, but it still left much to be desired in Rome, Naples, and throughout the South, although in a warm climate it is not as important an item of well-being as it is in Northern lands. Malaria and pellagra, which caused severe mortality in many provinces, had greatly diminished as a result of the discoveries of Celli, Grassi, Lombroso, and other scientists, the admirable work of the Red Cross and other organizations, the adoption of prophylactic measures, and the improved standard of life. In the Basilicata deaths from malaria had fallen from an annual average of 5,141 in the years 1890-1894 to 500 in 1909-1911, in Piedmont from 1,503 to 44 in the same period. Illiteracy, too, had decreased from the high percentage of 1861, although slowly. The law providing for obligatory instruction was not always rigorously enforced, especially in the remote mountainous districts of the South and the islands. But in the last years of the nineteenth and the first of the twentieth centuries, in addition to the State and municipal schools, a number of others were instituted by private organizations, for adults as well as for children, such as those of the Roman Campagna founded by the late Giovanni Cena and those under the auspices of the Associazione per il Mezzogiorno, first conceived and inspired by Professor Pasquale Villari and directed by Baron Leopoldo Franchetti. In the districts where emigration was important the necessity for education was apparent to all classes. But, according to Benedetto Croce, the exceptional intelligence of the Italian working classes, particularly in the rustic South, made illiteracy less of a handicap than it would have been in other lands.

Imports and exports increased steadily, and if after the rupture of commercial relations with France exports

showed a falling off from 2,500,000,000 lire to 2,200,000,000, during the next few years they rose to 3,000,000,000. Exports were always inferior to imports by about one milliard lire, but the half milliard of emigrants' remittances and a similar sum spent by foreign tourists in Italy covered the deficit. Public finance likewise improved. After the dangerous deficits of the early years of the Kingdom the Budget was balanced; then came the serious financial crisis of 1893, the disaster of the unavenged defeat in Africa, resulting in fresh deficits. But by the first years of the present century a surplus began to appear; some taxes could be reduced, the price of *rente*, of which the interest had been reduced from 5 per cent. to $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., was above par, and the paper currency was actually at a premium over gold. Unemployment was not a serious problem, because a large part of the industrial population was of rural origin, and when there was a slump in industry many workers who were ex-peasants returned to the land, where a certain amount of extra labour was always useful; this did not occur to the same extent in the South, but there industry was also less developed, and there was consequently less chance of industrial unemployment. There was a certain amount of artificial unemployment in the Lower Po Valley, where the Socialist organizations tried, not without success, to convert a part of the rural population from peasant farmers and *mezzadri* into day labourers, and to force the Government to undertake not always necessary public works during the season of greatest agricultural activity and to suspend them when agricultural work was slack, so as to increase the number of men likely to absorb revolutionary ideas. More serious was the condition of the middle classes. The mania for university education, the liberal professions, and for careers in the civil service resulted in a constant output of young men provided with university degrees and nothing else. The middle classes were, indeed, worse off than the rest of the population, especially the vast army of civil servants, who, just because of their excessive numbers, had to be badly paid, even in the highest ranks. It is surprising that, in spite of this state of things, so few cases of corruption occurred in the civil service and in the judiciary (which as in all Continental countries, was part of the civil

service). Officials who handled vast sums of money, and judges who tried cases involving many millions, retired after thirty or forty years' service poor men, with nothing but a small pension to live on—before the war no pension could exceed 8,000 lire, and few were those who received as much—unless they possessed private means. The average salary ranged from between 4,000 and 7,000 lire, and only a few earned as much as 10,000 or 12,000 lire, even with allowances. But while they were honest, they could hardly be expected to show much zeal in their work, and many, especially if they had large families, eked out their income by teaching, journalism, small business activities, or by acting as administrators of private estates, and even when such extra occupations were not strictly compatible with their position as servants of the State, they were winked at.

The chief drawback of the system was that it gave the Administration a narrow, *petit-bourgeois* outlook, constituting an obstacle to real progress. With the rapid development of industry and agriculture, the smarter youths issuing from the universities and technical colleges usually refused to enter the civil service and sought better-paid employment in business or the professions; only the less enterprising or the less capable were attracted to the public administration, although there were many notable exceptions. As the South was less affected by economic progress than the North, it came to supply a larger contingent to the Administration, which, from being predominantly Piedmontese, tended to become more and more Neapolitan and Sicilian, and, while the South provided many excellent officials, they were usually out of touch with business conditions, and, like the more old-fashioned Piedmontese bureaucrats, of whom Giovanni Giolitti was a typical example, viewed the business world with suspicion and dislike. Men accustomed to regard a salary of 10,000 lire per annum as a hardly attainable ideal, naturally considered business men and technical experts earning from 20,000 to 100,000 lire abnormalities and probably dishonest. The same conditions obtained among other members of the middle class—modest private employees, bank clerks, the less successful professional men, small landed proprietors, etc., a great many of whom were obsessed by the daily problem of how to make both ends meet.

Yet, in spite of all these difficulties, a great deal of excellent work was accomplished. The judges created an admirable tradition of impartial justice, even though the procedure was dilatory and cumbersome; the universities gave an output of high scientific work equalled by few other countries; and the Administration, if slow and sometimes inefficient, managed to get along somehow, its chief defect being its tendency to hamper economic progress by placing unnecessary obstacles in its way and its inevitable subservience to influential politicians.

Members of the highest class of society seldom entered the public services, both on account of the unattractive pay and the *petit-bourgeois* atmosphere. There were, of course, many exceptions in the case of men fired by enthusiasm for some form of public work, and also as regards the diplomatic and consular services and the army and navy, although even here there was nothing in the shape of an aristocratic or upper-middle-class monopoly.

The war, of course, produced a vast upheaval in the economic as in every other field. Its first and most obvious consequences were in the financial field. Before the war financial equilibrium had been gradually restored, and the Budget was balanced satisfactorily. But there was no margin for extraordinary expenditure, and it was indeed believed that it would be impossible for Italy ever to raise the money necessary for a war. Yet when the war came the impossible was achieved. The vast expenditure was covered partly by increased taxation and new loans, but also largely by fresh issues of fiduciary circulation. This last item, in which Italy was not alone in indulging, brought about a depreciation of the currency and a consequent increase of prices. Recourse had been had to it as it was the easiest and quickest way of raising money without apparently increasing taxation, although in reality it was tantamount to a confiscatory tax on certain forms of capital and on certain classes.

But it was post-war finance which contributed to the general state of chaos more than the measures enacted during the war. The producing classes were actually penalized, owing to the false economic notions and demagogic tendencies then prevailing. As the Socialists, without being by any means an actual majority, were the

predominant political force in the country, many measures were passed simply to placate them. Signor Nitti was more responsible than any other man for the disastrous post-war economic and financial situation. He thus maintained the above-mentioned bread subsidy—introduced during the war, when it was, perhaps, inevitable—long after all necessity or justification for it had disappeared and when it was involving the country in appalling expenditure. No reduction in the civil service, enormously increased during and since the war, could be effected, because the employees threatened to go on strike, as they often did, the moment there was any talk of it, and even the all-powerful Giolitti failed when he tried his hand at reduction and reform. The railways were the worst offenders for plethoric pay-rolls, inefficiency, and insubordination. The result was that huge deficits were piled up instead of being reduced after the war. During the last full war year (1917-1918) the deficit had only amounted to 150,000,000 lire, whereas in 1918-1919 it had risen to over 11 milliards. In 1920-1921 it amounted to 14,600,000,000, and although in the subsequent years it fell considerably owing to the cessation of certain post-war expenses and the abolition of the bread subsidy, it was still estimated at 6 milliards when the Fascists came into power, and experts believed that it would be impossible to reduce it, as no pre-Fascist Government was strong enough to enforce the necessary measures for its reduction. Taxation could not be increased, and no economies could be effected, as they would have implied a reduction of the civil service, which the staff and the Socialist party vetoed, and a reduction in public works and doles, which, although unnecessary in themselves, were indispensable for electioneering purposes. The Socialists and Communists and the trade union leaders, it should be noted, had no wish to see the national finances restored, (a) because they wanted to prove that under a bourgeois *régime* financial restoration was impossible, (b) because they counted on a financial catastrophe to bring about a revolution, and (c) because many of their leaders and organizations made a very good thing out of the existing state of financial chaos and economic confusion.

The economies which the Fascist Government was able to introduce, and the increased efficiency of all the public

services, soon made their effects felt on the financial situation. Signor Alberto De Stefani, a modest Professor of Political Economy in the Commercial High School of Venice, was selected as Finance Minister, and, on the death of Signor Tangorra, also as Treasury Minister. Besides effecting drastic economies, such as none of his predecessors could have dared even to dream of, he substituted as far as possible permanent for transitory sources of revenue, increasing the ratio of the former to the total in one year from 79.68 per cent. to 86.12 per cent. Taxation was simplified and its incidence rendered more equitable; death duties between next-of-kin were abolished so as to strengthen family ties (the sanctity of family life is one of the main principles of Fascism) and encourage saving, but large numbers of "fiscal deserters" who had managed to evade adequate taxation were now roped in and forced to bear their proper share of fiscal burdens.

The results were not slow to materialize. The deficit for 1922-1923, estimated, as we have seen, at between 5 and 6 milliards, was reduced at the revised estimates to 3,021,000,000 lire. At the end of 1923-1924, the first fiscal year wholly under Fascist rule, the deficit was still further reduced to 418,000,000 instead of the estimated one of 2,616,000,000, while in 1924-1925, instead of the estimated deficit of 1,353,000,000, there was actually a surplus—the first for fifteen years—of 417,000,000. During the successive years the surplus has been maintained, although its amount has diminished, and for the year 1927-1928 it was 497,000,000. This *risanamento finanziario* was the Government's first task, and, indeed, one of the main reasons which made a movement like Fascism inevitable if the country was to be saved from disaster; and if success with the Budget did not solve all financial difficulties, it paved the way for the solution of many. A balanced Budget was the first step towards the improvement of the currency.

The currency, which, owing to inter-Allied measures for its stability, had only dropped to a small extent during the war (it was about 30 to 35 to the pound), began to fall rapidly after the war, when the above measures ceased to operate; at the end of 1919 it was at 50 to the pound, and early in 1920 at 65 to 70, and continued to fall steadily

with occasional halts and small recoveries. At the moment of the March on Rome it was at 116, but as soon as Signor Mussolini was installed in power and had begun to introduce financial order the lira improved, and it was hoped that the improvement would not only be maintained, but increased. International complications, however, especially the occupation of the Ruhr and its effects on the German situation and the consequent fall of the franc, affected the lira unfavourably, and for some time it ranged about 100. In the summer of 1925 there was a sudden drop, provoked, in the first instance, by the manœuvres of the Opposition groups, who counted on the fall of the lira to bring about that of Fascism, and precipitated by speculation resulting in a panic among the public. The lira fell to 150, and although there was a rally in the autumn, another panic followed in the summer of 1926, owing to a belief sedulously fostered by interested parties that the Italian Government meant to follow the example of that of Germany and reduce the lira to zero, and brought it again to 140-150.

But on August 18th of that year Signor Mussolini delivered his famous speech at Pesaro, in which he declared his firm intention of defending the lira at all costs, in order to defend the hard-earned savings of the Italian people. That speech, accompanied by practical financial reforms and measures for "rarefying" the lira in foreign markets, produced a dramatic change in the currency situation, and from that moment the lira began steadily to recover. From 147 to the pound it rose to 125, and after remaining at that point for a few months it again improved, and eventually reached 90 (some days it was actually as high as 83), and it appeared to have secured a *de facto* stabilization at that figure. This improvement, which had also been brought about by fiscal facilities for the import of foreign capital for productive purposes, a steady reduction of the circulation, the balancing of the Budget, which, as we have seen, actually showed a considerable surplus, and the restrictions on the granting of credits by the banks to industrial undertakings, raised certain new difficulties. While the importers and persons paying interest on foreign capital were benefited, the exporters suffered, as the cost of production remained stationary or diminished very slowly,

while the value of the foreign currencies in which they were paid diminished considerably. Also the possibility that the lira might appreciate still further discouraged Italian capital from investing in industrial undertakings, and produced a temporary increase of unemployment. Wholesale prices began to diminish, but retail ones were slower in following suit, as inevitably happens in such circumstances. House rents showed no tendency to fall, until the Government restored the Rent Restriction Acts, which immediately brought about a sharp reduction both in rents and in the purchase price of houses and flats. Other measures were taken to enforce reductions of retail prices, and a number of agreements were arrived at between employers and workers for reducing wages so as to bring them to the level of the improvement in the currency, and thus by reducing the cost of production bring about a corresponding fall in the cost of living. Certain taxes were reduced, although the Government could not afford to go very far in that direction as yet, as its expenses could not be correspondingly lowered, while some of its revenues were considerably reduced by the general economic situation. Certain foreign observers have remarked that the improvement of the currency greatly reduced the burden of Italy's annual payments on inter-Allied war debts. This is true; but, on the other hand, it correspondingly reduced the value of Italy's share of German reparations, so that the two differences practically balanced each other.

There was, no doubt, a good deal of exaggeration in the complaints of certain classes of business men at the effects of deflation. Signor Mussolini, in a speech delivered in 1928 at the Augusteo before the delegates of the labour syndicates, declared that he had heard many complaints in this connection, but that hardly any of them proceeded from the working classes, although they had had to contribute a large share of the reduction of expenditure. Anyone who was in Italy at the time can bear out this assertion from personal experience. The present writer, who has frequent occasions to come in contact with the working classes, especially with the agricultural population, among whom he has many personal friends, heard the various Government measures discussed with far more serenity and common sense in those circles than in aristocratic houses

or among the members of clubs frequented by the wealthy. There were many persons who had previously made large profits during the period of inflation, which they pocketed in silence, whereas now they squealed when their profits diminished.

The next step was the settlement of the war debts with the United States and Great Britain. This was arranged on a satisfactory basis in 1926 by the Finance Minister, Count Volpi.

But it appeared necessary to take such further action as would restore a measure of certainty into business operations and eliminate once and for all the danger of further fluctuations in the currency. This could only be achieved by stabilization. It was necessary to choose the right psychological moment and the right figure for the exchange if the operation was to be successful. In certain sections of the public it was hoped that legal stabilization would be deferred until the market value of the lira was brought to pre-war parity, or at all events to a much higher figure than its present value. In theory this was, no doubt, possible and, perhaps, desirable. But in practice it would have required a considerable time, and in the meanwhile the economic life of the country would have been kept in a state of dangerous uncertainty and instability, with a resultant paralysis of industry and increased unemployment. The fixing of a new parity is as much a political as a financial measure, as it influences the whole life of the country and the position of the Government both at home and abroad. After mature reflection and consultation of experts on the pros and cons, the Prime Minister decided in the autumn of 1927 on stabilization, and in December of that year a decree was issued abolishing the forced currency and fixing the value of the lira at 92'46. I need not enter into the technical details of the operation, beyond saying that it was carried out by the Banca d'Italia with the assistance of the Bank of England, the United States Federal Reserve Bank, the central banks of other gold currency countries, of the Bank of France, and of some private banks, which placed certain gold credits at the disposal of the Banca d'Italia. The latter, which had since the Fascist régime become the only bank of issue in Italy (until 1926 the Banco di Napoli and the Banco di Sicilia were also entitled

to issue notes), thus came to have a reserve in gold or its equivalent of £130,000,000, corresponding to 57 per cent. of the total note circulation and all other sight liabilities. Such an arrangement would not have been possible if the foreign Governments and bankers, comprising the ablest financial minds in the world, had not had the fullest confidence in the solidity of the Italian political, financial, and economic situation.

Stabilization caused general satisfaction throughout Italy and enhanced the country's prestige throughout the world. Its first effect was to bring about an immediate improvement in the value of all Italian securities of an average of 10 per cent., which was afterwards to increase still further. More foreign capital was also attracted towards Italian investments, so much so that the Government had subsequently to intervene to restrain the influx so as not to increase Italian indebtedness abroad to too great an extent.

Signor Mussolini, in the speech with which he submitted the decree of stabilization to the Cabinet, declared that the conditions which had made the measure possible were the following :

1. The discipline, hard work, and self-sacrifice of the Italian people.
2. The balancing of the Budget, which was the indispensable preliminary operation.
3. The limitation of the privilege of issuing notes to a single independent bank.
4. The gradual reduction of the paper currency.
5. The settlement of the war debts on a satisfactory basis.
6. The funding of the internal floating debt (the conversion of short-term Treasury bills into the consolidated Littorio loan in 1927).
7. The improvement in the international balance of payments.
8. The *de facto* stability of the exchange, which for the past eight months had been at about 90 to the pound.
9. The gradual adjustment of prices and wages to the improved value of the lira.
10. The securing of an adequate reserve in gold or equivalent currencies to cover the fiduciary circulation.

In his speech in the Chamber of Deputies on May 25th, 1928, the Finance Minister, Count Volpi, summed up the financial situation which stabilization had brought about after five months of the new parity. He paid a warm tribute to the manner in which the Italian people had faced the necessary sacrifices. "The solution adopted has been accepted as the best and as the one which has taken into account the necessity of a sound social distribution of the effects of stabilization in an essentially importing country." The advantages brought about by the abolition of the forced currency and the assured stability of the exchange would render a further reduction of the circulation possible as the general economic conditions improve; this has, indeed, already taken place since December, 1927, to a considerable amount. There was a surplus of income over expenditure at the end of April, 1928, of 130,000,000.¹

Economic development followed a course somewhat different from that of public finance, but was closely affected by it. We have seen how during the last years preceding the war a considerable measure of economic progress had been achieved, both in agriculture and industry, in spite of the many drawbacks of the then existing political system. The war produced an abnormal state of things which cannot, of course, be regarded as in any way typical, nor as part of the general development of the country. Let us see how post-war conditions affected agriculture. The average wheat harvest in 1909-1913 was, as we have stated, about 45,000,000 quintals, while the annual consumption was between 60,000,000 and 70,000,000. There was a decline in the crop during the war and in the troublous post-war years, the lowest figure being that of 1920, when only 38,000,000 were produced. But an improvement soon began, especially since the advent of the Fascist *régime*, and in 1925 the crop amounted to over 65,000,000 quintals, beating all previous records. But the annual consumption had now grown to about 75,000,000, and the Government determined to make an effort to increase the output until it sufficed to meet the needs of the population. A campaign called the "battle for wheat" was undertaken, by means of a vigorous propaganda for in-

¹ The surplus had increased to 407,000,000 by the end of the financial year, as we have already seen.

tensifying and improving production all over the country, especially in the areas where methods were more backward, and large sums are spent on the reclamation of the swamps which still remained. Great drainage works were undertaken in the Lazio, and the Maccarese swamps are being rapidly converted into fertile wheatfields; the same is being begun in the Pontine Marshes, which had baffled the efforts of the ancient Romans, the Popes, Napoleon, and the Government of Italy. The idea is not to extend the actual acreage under wheat except in the case of the swamp-lands which are being drained; in the rest of the country it is intended that the area shall remain the same, but that cultivation shall be intensified and improved. The new system of *bonifica integrale* (the co-ordination of all the aspects of reclamation and improvement) should still further increase the output. A vast scheme of agricultural credits has also been introduced to enable the farmers to secure land improvement loans on easy terms. The first two years of the new policy were exceptionally bad from a climatic point of view, and but for the vigorous efforts of the Government the harvest would have been well below the average. Instead of which, the wheat crop of 1926, which was a bad year, was 60,000,000 quintals, and that of 1927, one of the worst years on record for many decades, amounted to 53,000,000, a higher figure than that of any other year except 1926 and 1925. That of 1928, by no means a good year, was 62,000,000. The full effects of the wheat campaign should be felt during the next few years. If we consider the total agricultural output, we find that, while there has been a steady increase in its value (in gold) since the beginning of the century, that increase has been much more rapid since 1922. Thus, in the eighteen years from 1904 to 1922 the value had risen from 5 milliards of gold lire to 8,500,000,000—i.e., an annual increase of just under 200,000,000 gold lire. Since 1922 the annual increase has been 450,000,000.

An even more rapid development has been achieved in Italian industry. To quote the figures for electricity alone, while the output before the war had been 2,000,000,000 kilowatt-hours, in 1923-1924 it had risen to 6,700,000,000, in 1924-1925 to 7,200,000,000, and when the new plants now in course of erection are in operation it will be well

over 8,000,000,000. The capital invested in electrical enterprises has grown from 600,000,000 lire in 1914 to 1,150,000,000 (in gold) in 1926. Electrical development offers so promising a field for investment that it has attracted large sums of foreign capital, chiefly from the United States, in the last two years. Electricity is being applied to railway traction on a large scale, and to-day the lines from Leghorn to Modane, from Florence to Bologna, from Benevento to Foggia, from Rome to Avezzano, from Genoa to Voghera, from Genoa to Savona, have been electrified, and electrification is being pushed rapidly on other lines. The cotton, silk, and wool industries have all been advancing rapidly, and the new industry of artificial silk has been making gigantic strides in the last few years. The railway returns are equally indicative of the progress achieved; the traffic conveyed has grown from 37,500,000 tons in 1913 to 58,000,000 in 1925. Italian steamship traffic has likewise increased. The number of steam vessels, which in 1914 had been only 949 with a total tonnage of 876,885, in 1926 had risen to 1,410 with a tonnage of 1,887,567. But the character of the traffic has also changed. The emigrant traffic has greatly declined owing to the restrictive measures of the United States Government and other causes, but by far the greater part of it is conveyed on Italian ships; similarly, the greater part of the goods traffic to and from Italian ports is carried under the Italian flag. Italian lines now also compete successfully with foreign ones for the conveyance of cabin passengers and run vessels as fast, as large, and as luxurious as those of almost any foreign company. Practically all the passenger traffic between Europe and the Near East is now in Italian hands. Italian ships convey considerable quantities of foreign passengers and goods between foreign ports.

There is one serious economic problem which under all Italian Governments since the *Risorgimento* has occupied a pre-eminent position—that of Southern Italy. It is not, indeed, exclusively an economic problem, and has educational, cultural, social, and political aspects; but the economic factor dominates the others. No survey of Italian conditions to-day would be complete without some examination of the South Italian problem.

When the Bourbon Kingdom was absorbed into that of

united Italy in 1861 its provinces were found to be in a very different condition from that, not only of the old Piedmontese nucleus, but of all the rest of Italy. Southern Italy and Sicily were in a far more backward state, economically poorer, the people less educated, and the general machinery of civilization more primitive. Although Italy as a whole was less advanced than other European countries, parts of the North and of the Centre had, as we have seen, made considerable economic and social progress. Above all, the administration of the Kingdom of Sardinia, of Lombardy and Venetia under the Austrians, and of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, were fairly efficient. In the South agriculture was in a most primitive state, and industry hardly existed at all except for the textile trades in a few districts. There were few and bad roads and hardly any railways, and the general level of civilization and education was very low. The administration was incredibly incompetent, justice alone being fair and honest. Certain other areas of Italy, although they did not form part of the Bourbon Monarchy, were in very similar conditions, especially the Lazio and the island of Sardinia.

It was hoped and believed at the time, among all classes interested in politics and social progress, that unity with the rest of Italy, the conferring of free institutions, and the introduction of compulsory education would rapidly transform the whole face of Southern Italy and wipe out all traces of the bad old times, for the backwardness of the South Italians was generally attributed exclusively to the shortcomings of the Bourbon Government.

But it was soon discovered that progress was far more difficult than had been at first imagined, that the population continued to be as poor as before, if not poorer, that progress in every field was held up by innumerable obstacles, that the customs and traditions of the inhabitants were opposed to real improvement. These difficulties were first realized on the outbreak of brigandage in 1861, which has already been described. The nature of the movement was at the time greatly misunderstood both at home and abroad. In Northern Italy the outbreak in the South was regarded as a proof of the inherent moral inferiority of the Southerners, and thus arose that attitude of contempt which the North soon came to feel for the South.

Brigandage as an organized movement, supported by the exiled Bourbons and foreign Legitimists, was stamped out by 1865, when the last leaders were killed or captured. But it continued sporadically for many years longer, and in Sicily and Sardinia cases of highway robbery, the capture of well-to-do persons for ransom, and other outrages for purposes of blackmail or private vengeance, remained very frequent. The Mafia in Sicily, the Camorra in Naples, and the Mala Vita¹ in various other parts of the South, exploited the mass of the population, and comprised among their members not only common criminals, but many persons of seeming respectability and good social standing; the terrorism which they exercised, and the reluctance on the part of the people, due to centuries of misgovernment, to appeal for assistance and protection against crime to the authorities, or give evidence against the criminals, from a mistaken sense of honour as well as from fear, enabled them to dominate whole districts. This state of things contributed to make North Italians regard the Southerners as filled with moral depravity. This attitude was to some extent enhanced by that of certain Southerners, who, coming for the first time into contact with the more progressive and civilized North, began to feel contempt for their own homelands and to see nothing good south of Rome, just as certain Italians from all parts of the country, when they travelled abroad, looked upon everything foreign as superior to everything Italian, a state of mind which persisted in many persons until quite recent times.

The beauty of the scenery and the charm of the climate of those parts of the South which North Italians and foreigners more usually visited—Naples and its environs, the Riviera of Amalfi, Palermo and the Conca d'Oro, Taormina, Syracuse, etc.—were regarded as additional evidence of the inferiority of the Southern people, for it was said that with such natural advantages and such marvellous ancient works of art the South should be the richest, most prosperous and civilized region of Italy, if not of the world, and that if it remained wretchedly poor and backward it must be the fault of the inhabitants. It was, indeed, the same argument on which foreigners were

¹ This is not exactly an organization, but may be described as the criminal underworld.

apt to base their belief in the inferiority of the Italian people as a whole.

The average Southerner, apart from the minority mentioned above, who looked upon the North as Paradise, came to regard the Northern Italians as the exploiters of the South. Union had proved at the time disastrous to the few South Italian industries; these could not withstand the competition of the better organized Northern ones, whose products invaded the South for the benefit of the Lombard and Piedmontese manufacturers. There was never, except among a handful of diehard pro-Bourbons, any desire for a return of the old, unhappy, far-off things, but there was disappointment that the new *régime* did not bring all the blessings which had been expected of it and promised.

The new free institutions were seized upon by the local coteries and utilized by them to strengthen their hold upon the masses and to exploit the scanty resources of the country for their own benefit, while compulsory education, effective only for a comparatively small part of the population, merely served to create discontent with existing conditions. Popular representation, especially on the local bodies, was dominated by certain influential families and groups or by the Camorra and the Mafia, of which many honest political men and administrators were forced to make use. A flagrant example of this state of things was the case of the millionaire mayor of Piana dei Greci in Sicily, who for many years had been the absolute master of the town and district, but is now undergoing a long sentence of imprisonment for a series of crimes committed or inspired by him. Although no one ignored his guilt, it was not until Signor Mussolini's vigorous anti-Mafia campaign that he could be brought to book. It was the boast of Signor Mori, the Chief of Police in Palermo, that he had had fourteen millionaires arrested.

Owing to the lack of amenities of life in the smaller towns of the South, no officials wanted to be stationed there, and consequently to be transferred to the South came to be regarded as a punishment for a Northern civil servant or judge, unless he was at the very beginning of his career, while for a Southerner to be sent North was tantamount to promotion. It therefore happened, as a rule, that the less worthy and capable officials were given appointments

in the South, whereas the best should have been employed to cope with the more difficult local problems.

But gradually the Southern problem and people came to be appreciated in a different manner. Perhaps the first man to place the question before Italian public opinion in its true light was the late Pasquale Villari, whose now famous *Lettere meridionali* threw a flood of new light on it. In the first chapters of the book, dealing with the Camorra, the Mafia and brigandage, he pointed out, almost for the first time, that the true cause of the backwardness of the South as compared with the North was poverty, combined with the neglect both by the Government and the local upper classes, which had continued even after the fall of the Bourbons. The Mafia and the Camorra could only flourish amid a very poor proletariat, accustomed, moreover, to regard the authorities with suspicion, and Professor Villari exposed the really terrible poverty of the Southern people. Brigandage was only possible because the brigands were supported by the peasantry, and the peasantry supported them or became brigands themselves because they were very poor and sympathized with those who preyed upon the rich and lived at their expense. The rich were, indeed, few, and hardly any of them very rich; but to the very poor the mere existence of persons possessing any wealth at all seemed to constitute a social injustice. Moreover, many of the well-to-do owned large estates, even though they did not draw correspondingly large incomes from them, and some of these families lived in a state of outward pomp and splendour in sharp contrast with the conditions of their neighbours, and this aroused a feeling of envy and hatred against them among the poor. Many of the wealthier landlords, unlike those of Northern Italy or Tuscany, were absentees, living in Naples, Palermo, or the smaller towns of the South, or even in Rome or Florence, and seldom, if ever, visited their estates. They took no interest in their improvement or in the conditions of their peasantry, and were content to receive revenues sufficient to keep themselves in comfort, whereas by improving them they would have acquired far greater wealth for themselves and enriched the population at large. Moreover, the same lack of the amenities of life in the rural districts and the small towns of the South which had repelled civil servants,

the existence of brigandage and malaria, and the comparative simplicity and cheapness of life even among the rich, contributed to maintain this state of inferiority. In spite of the reforms introduced by the French *régime* under Joseph Bonaparte and Joachim Murat, many relics of feudalism and many old abuses survived or were revived after the restoration of 1815. Above all, there remained a sharp distinction of classes in the population—between the *galantuomini* on the one hand (*i.e.*, the nobles and the landowning and professional bourgeoisie) and the *lazzaroni*, or town proletariat, and the *cafoni*, or peasantry, on the other. This division had long existed, and the fact that the *lazzaroni* and *cafoni* saw in the Crown their only protection against the upper classes explains the popular enthusiasm with which King Ferdinand IV. was supported in his struggle against the Liberal-Democratic aristocracy in the Revolution of 1799. The ingratitude of the King towards the peasantry and the *lazzaroni*, to whom he owed his first restoration, afterwards facilitated the return of the French, and later made the masses accept the *régime* set up by Garibaldi and Victor Emmanuel, as they hoped that the new King would really protect them against exploitation more effectively than the Bourbons had done. Even in later years there was no part of Italy more loyal to the Monarchy than the South, and on more than one occasion agrarian rebellions against the local landlords and the municipalities were led by men bearing the national flag, and illegal seizures of estates were carried out to the tune of the *Marcia Reale*. But the division of classes remained, and the consequent sympathy with men outside the law.

It must not be thought that the *galantuomini* were all bad. It was, indeed, in that class that some of the noblest figures of the Risorgimento and of the most high-minded civil servants, jurists, officers, and diplomats of united Italy were to be found, beginning with the heroic victims of Bourbon reaction and treachery, supported, one must admit with regret, by Nelson, such as Caracciolo, Cirillo, Pagano, Eleonora Fonseca de Pimentel, down to the gallant gentlemen who languished in the Bourbon prisons in later years—the Poerio brothers, the Duke of Castro-mediano, Luigi, Settembrini, and many others. In more recent times the South has given Italy a number of eminent

and patriotic statesmen such as Crispi and Salandra, Fortunato and the Marquis di San Giuliano, and innumerable scholars, jurists, journalists, men of letters, and scientists. But the men of 1799 and of the Risorgimento were in the South, even more than in the rest of Italy, out of touch with the life of the masses and too much absorbed by the political problem to understand the grave economic and social questions calling for solution before unity, independence, and liberty could produce their effects and bring about the benefits expected of them. Pasquale Villari was, as I have said, one of the first Italians to point out the urgency of solving the social problem of the South. Others, not themselves Southerners, such as Sidney Sonnino and Leopoldo Franchetti, devoted their activities to the study of the economic situation, and a large mass of literature was produced on the *problema del Mezzogiorno*. Gradually it became clear that the causes of the deplorable poverty of the South must be sought, not in the laziness, incompetence, or immorality of the people, but in the natural handicaps of their country, enhanced by the bad traditions of past times and *régimes*. The vaunted fertility and perfect climate of the South are limited to a few favoured spots, a large part of the soil is mountainous and sterile, the forests have to a great extent been destroyed, the rainfall is heavy in the winter when it is not wanted, while there are long periods of drought in the summer when rain is badly needed. Of the plains many are malarious, owing to ill-regulated watercourses and lack of proper drainage, and the land system based on too large estates in some parts is detrimental in one way, while the "pulverization" of property—i.e., its division into too minute allotments elsewhere—is harmful in another.

It was further realized that the South Italian, far from being lazy and incompetent, was one of the hardest workers in the world, even though his work, owing to the above-mentioned natural handicaps and the absence of well-informed leadership, was not so economically productive as that of workers in some other countries. During the Napoleonic campaign in Russia the Neapolitan soldiers proved the hardest and toughest, and during the World War the South Italians, Sicilians, and Sardinians fought as gallantly as any other troops and showed the

same resistance to hardships and cold as their ancestors on the Moskova or the Beresina. The Sardinian Sassari brigade earned immortal fame on the Carso, and the Abruzzesi and Sicilians vied with the natives of Piedmont and the Cadore as Alpine troops. Once it was realized that the fault lay not entirely nor chiefly with the people themselves, a solution had to be sought by trying to overcome the handicaps from which they were suffering.

These handicaps were by no means insurmountable. Solutions of the various economic difficulties undoubtedly do exist and are gradually being arrived at. The first attempt at a solution of the economic problem as a whole was made by the people themselves. During the last thirty years before the war large numbers of South Italians and Sicilians emigrated abroad to lands where labour was scarcer and wages higher. Emigration undoubtedly did reduce the pressure of population, tended to raise the level of wages, and the sums sent or brought home by the emigrants helped to do away with usury and enabled an ever-increasing number of peasants to pay off old debts, buy plots of land, and build themselves new houses.

But the solution was of a temporary nature. It did not solve the problem of agricultural improvement nor introduce industry. Moreover, it left the South Italian population at the mercy of immigration countries and dependent on their economic conditions, their caprices and prejudices, and their political vicissitudes. At any moment the gates of this or that labour market might be closed to Italian emigrants, as has, indeed, actually happened in the case of the United States. The study of the Southern question attracted the attention of a growing number of statesmen, economists, students of social science, and agricultural experts. The *Associazione per il Mezzogiorno* did excellent work in this connection, contributing to reduce illiteracy and to the encouragement of education in general and to agricultural improvement. Capitalists from the North began to take an interest in the South from a purely business point of view; some of them set up industries, others purchased estates which they developed and improved. A certain number of local capitalists also undertook improvements on their own properties, such as the Pavoncelli and Le Roche-Foucault families in the Puglie, the Marquis Nunziante and the

Duca di Cardinale in Calabria and others in Sicily. In a few places peasant co-operative societies, known as *affittanze collettive*, were formed, particularly in Sicily, to rent and cultivate land. All the time, both as a result of emigration and of other causes, peasant ownership was rapidly increasing.

The Government did not remain wholly idle regarding the Southern problem, and was at last moved to enact a series of measures for bettering the conditions of the South, especially in the matter of public works on a large scale. Some of these attempts were undoubtedly successful. Thus, the law for Naples did contribute to reduce, if not to eliminate, the slum area and to promote the setting up of industries in the city. There is now a wide industrial zone round Naples, free of taxation, where a number of important works have been set up; the Cotonificio meridionale, to mention but one of them, is the largest in Italy, and one of the best managed in the world. The port of Naples has benefited very considerably by the emigrant movement, and of late years has also acquired importance for the cabin passenger traffic. In 1922 the dock labourers' and port workers' unions, which had been wholly in the hands of Red agitators and paralyzed the trade of the port, were thoroughly reorganized by the Fascists, and the landing and embarking of passengers and the loading and unloading of goods now proceed with the utmost discipline and regularity, which was certainly not the case in the past.

The great Apulian aqueduct, one of the boldest and most difficult enterprises of the kind ever undertaken, was planned in order to supply the driest area in Italy, where water often had to be transported to many places by rail and cost more than wine, with a plentiful supply of good water both for drinking and irrigation. It was also discovered that in some of the most arid districts there was good water below the surface, which could be secured by artesian wells or electric pumps.

The researches of agricultural experts further disclosed that, while the crops usually cultivated in the South, particularly cereals, suffered from the wet winters and the dry summers, there were other agricultural possibilities, such as the plantation of ligneous and leguminous plants, fruit-trees, vegetables, fodder, etc., for which the climate

appeared admirably suited. In other districts cereals might also be cultivated by a better selection of the various types of seed, the use of artificial fertilizers, and irrigation. A wider field was offered by land reclamation and drainage, such as had been applied with so much success in the Venteo, Emilia, Romagna, and the Tuscan Maremma. Along the whole coast of Southern Italy and the islands, and also in many parts of the interior, there were fertile plains, the proper cultivation of which was rendered impossible by malaria. The labourers had either to live many kilometres from their work, which was consequently rendered less efficient, or run the risk of contracting the dread disease; in many cases they were subject to both handicaps. This fact, as well as brigandage, tended to concentrate the agricultural population in large villages and towns, while in the open country not a dwelling-house was to be seen over vast areas.

To obviate these many drawbacks, various forms of Government activity and assistance were necessary. In the first place, valuable health work was accomplished by the State sanitary services and the Red Cross, as well as by private organizations, by the wholesale distribution of quinine and by providing wire netting for the houses. Then there was reafforestation, the irregularity of the water-courses being largely due to the destruction of the forests begun under the Bourbons and continued after the Risorgimento. For many years very little was accomplished in this field, but already before the war a promising beginning had been made, and to-day the work is carried on more systematically and rapidly. In the second place, the canalization of the watercourses was necessary, so as to prevent them from overflowing their banks and creating new marshes. Thirdly, the existing swamps had to be drained. The water thus harnessed could also be used for irrigation purposes. But where the rainfall is very irregular—months of drought followed by short periods of devastating floods—the only lasting solution is found in the creation of artificial lakes where the water can be stored in the wet months and utilized in the dry. These artificial lakes are very interesting attempts to harness Nature. The largest of all is the Tirso Lake in Sardinia, which is, indeed, one of the largest in the world. Its capacity is of

426,000,000 cubic metres, and apart from its utility in preventing floods and irrigating a large area, it will also be useful for providing a considerable amount of electric power for industrial purposes. Two other similar but smaller lakes have been created in the island, and a series of four are being constructed in the Sila Mountains of Calabria, while others are in course of construction in the Abruzzi, in Sicily, and elsewhere. A few words on the Sila scheme, conducted by the Società delle forze idrauliche della Sila, may be of interest. By erecting a series of dams a vast mass of water is collected in the basis of several ancient lakes, long dried up. There is a drop of 1,000 metres, capable of developing 120,000 horse-power, developing 700,000,000 kilowatt-hours per annum—*i.e.*, nearly one-tenth of the total present output of all Italy. It will supply electricity not only for Calabria itself, but also for the Basilicata, the Puglie, and parts of Eastern Sicily. Its high-power lines will be linked up with those of other existing undertakings in Southern Italy, thus forming one large distributing system for the whole area, and eventually the Southern system will be connected with those of Central and Northern Italy. One of its stations, drawing its power from the Matese Lake, already supplies part of the Puglie and has led to the closing down of some sixty small thermic electric stations using coal.

There are various land reclamation schemes independent of electric power production in many parts of the South. One in the province of Caserta has been carried out by the Opera Nazionale dei Combattenti (the ex-service men's association). Another interesting scheme is that for the development of the Gargano Peninsula. This beautiful but little-known district is a thickly wooded, mountainous promontory jutting out into the Adriatic in the province of Foggia, on the Northern shore of which are the two salt lakes of Lesina and Varano, separated from the sea by a narrow strip of land. The shores are very fertile, but swampy and malarious. There had been various schemes for the development of the peninsula, but only lately have they begun to materialize. The swamps are to be drained, a railway is to be built from San Severo di Puglia on the main line from Foggia to Ancona, the Ministry of Marine is conducting operations at the Lake of Varano so as to

provide a new harbour for the fleet in the Adriatic, while several points on the Gargano might be developed as tourist resorts.

Altogether there were in 1925 592,455 hectares of land subject to reclamation of the first category—i.e., the most important and urgent part. Of this area over 300,000 hectares have been already reclaimed, 148,000 were in course of reclamation, and 130,000 still await reclamation. There are also other districts requiring improvement in all parts of the South, which will be dealt with as soon as funds are available. Many improvement and reclamation works were commenced years ago, and some were completed before the war. After the Armistice the troubles and disorders of the years 1919-1922 made their further progress very slow, while Parliamentary log-rolling and intrigue, both before and after the war, interfered with them. It often happened that all the available funds were absorbed by one or more schemes in a certain constituency because of the intervention of some influential deputy or *grande elettore*, so that there was no money left for other, perhaps more urgent and useful but less effectively supported schemes. The war, which brought economic advantages to many parts of North Italy, was less profitable to the South, and it has only been in quite recent years, with the disappearance of Parliamentary intrigue, that the work of reclamation and improvement has been pushed forward rapidly, regularly and efficiently.

One of the chief obstacles has always been the lack of capital. In some cases private enterprise was able to supply it without Government assistance, and this was usually the case with the hydro-electric undertakings. Some of the reclamation schemes were carried out by the local landowners, either alone or more usually grouped in a consortium. In other cases the landowners could not afford to face the temporary loss of income necessary before their estates could be transformed from malarious grazing-lands bringing in comparatively small but certain revenues into more highly developed forms of cultivation producing much larger revenues in the long run, but very little or none at all for several years. Some important organizations were created for financing these enterprises. One of them is the "Associazione esercenti imprese elettriche," founded in

1899; another is the "Istituto di credito per le imprese di pubblica utilità," created in 1924 with a capital of 100,000,000 lire, subscribed by the "Cassa Depositi e Prestiti," various insurance companies, some of the savings banks, etc. Loans are granted on easy terms for carrying out the undertakings necessary in order to utilize the concessions made by the State, the provinces and the larger municipalities.

An important innovation introduced by the present Government is the creation of the *Provveditorati alle opere pubbliche*, or commissions for public works in the South. Until this scheme had been adopted the various improvement and development enterprises promoted or assisted by the State and other public bodies were carried on independently of each other, one public department sometimes competing with and acting against others. Thus it often happened that a tract of land would be drained, but no provision made for afforestation or the necessary roads, while in another agricultural improvements would be carried out, but the land remained undrained and without proper housing accommodation for the workers. In this way large sums of money were spent and admirable engineering work executed, but the efforts were to a large extent nullified owing to lack of co-operation. Under the new system all the public works undertaken in each province of the South—irrigation, drainage, reclamation, agricultural improvement, reafforestation, road building, housing, anti-malarial action, electrical supply, etc.—are placed under the control of the *provveditore*, so that what is known as *bonifica integrale*, or integral reclamation, will be possible.

All this work is undoubtedly transforming Southern Italy beyond recognition. Much remains yet to be done, and it is doubtful if the South will ever be as industrialized as the North. But the intelligence, sobriety and industriousness of the South Italians, and the almost untapped agricultural resources of that part of Italy, still offer considerable possibilities for increased prosperity, while its mineral resources, of which we as yet know little, may provide surprises. Neither Nature nor humanity can be changed in a day, nor even in a year. But the Southern Italy of Pasquale Villari's *Lettere meridionali* is no more.

As we shall see in the chapter on the Corporative State, one of the chief tasks of the new system has been to eliminate as far as possible the inequalities still existing between the wages and social conditions generally of the working classes of the South and those of the North.

The various handicaps from which Italy suffers, the lack of coal and other raw materials, the inadequacy of circulating capital, obstacles to the expansion of the population, still exist. The hindrances to the emigration of the population abroad are, indeed, more severe than they were before the war, for the reasons already explained, and emigration can no longer be counted upon as an available asset. The further development of agriculture and industry at home has undoubtedly provided employment for many who would otherwise have emigrated to foreign lands, and while the exodus has greatly diminished, unemployment, even in the period of currency deflation, was never as great as it was before the American restrictive measures and other causes had reduced it to its present level. While before the period of deflation it had fallen as low as 78,000, the maximum it reached at the end of 1927 was 439,000, since when it has again fallen considerably in 1928-29. Recent legislation, dealt with elsewhere, is attempting to prevent labour disputes from degenerating into suspensions of production, and this will prove an invaluable economic asset. As for that future development which should provide employment for the increasing population, there are undoubted possibilities in various fields. Apart from industry, which still offers many openings in an imperfectly industrialized country, even in agriculture much can yet be done to increase and improve production. As the agricultural expert Signor Arturo Marescalchi recently stated in the *Corriere della Sera* (May 12th, 1928), in some areas a yield of 40 quintals of wheat per hectare has been attained by means of improved cultivation, where only 20 were produced before; even if the general average were increased from the present figure of 12.5 quintals to 15, the total crop would range about 70,000,000 quintals, with an increased value of 1,500,000,000 lire. In the North irrigation has achieved wonders, and has paid the expenses involved many times over. But in the South, where, as we have seen, drought is so frequent, irrigation is absolutely

the life of agriculture. In the Campania¹ irrigation has doubled, and in some places trebled, the income from the soil; the 15,000,000 to 16,000,000 lire of large-scale market garden production could be raised to 30,000,000. The increase of income through improvement has been 900 lire per hectare in the North, 1,500 in Sicily, 2,500 in Campania. These figures indicate what may be done in the near future.

Above all, there is a new spirit in the air, a new determination in all classes that the country shall advance in spite of all handicaps and that the country shall produce more and become more prosperous. One has but to mix with persons in every walk of life, especially with those of humbler conditions and in the rural areas, to realize this. Every *contadino* feels at last that his work is of importance for the national welfare, and that the ruling classes and the authorities appreciate the fact. But success can only be achieved by hard, unremitting toil and the close collaboration of the whole people under the guidance of the State and of the wisest and most competent men. Other countries, faced by less serious handicaps, can overcome their difficulties in other ways, and also indulge in certain forms of economic extravagance without running the risk of national disaster. But Italy must, at all events for several years more, avoid any dangerous relaxation in the spirit of national discipline. Only thus can she hope to find a definite solution of her economic problem.

¹ *I.e.*, the area round Naples, not to be confused with the Campagna of Rome.

XIII

FASCIST SYNDICALISM

THE most interesting and original aspect of the Fascist movement is undoubtedly the syndicalist organization. In its inception Fascism had no particular labour policy, although many of the men who first joined it had played an active part in the earlier labour movements. Notably Signor Mussolini himself, who had been one of the leaders of the Syndicalist wing—at the time constituting the extremist group—of the Socialist Party. The first Fascist programme, formulated in March, 1919, contained only a few vague allusions to labour questions. But as Fascism was essentially a patriotic movement, and as the pre-existing labour organizations were closely associated with the anti-patriotic activities of the Socialists and Communists, especially since the triumph of Bolshevism in Russia, the new Fascist group found itself up against what professed to be, and had originally actually been, a movement for the betterment of the working classes. Fascism had never been opposed to that betterment; indeed, with its patriotic basis, it could not be opposed to it, as by fighting for the general prosperity and progress of the country as a whole, it was promoting the well-being of the working classes, who form the immense majority of the people.

The Socialist movement was, as we have seen, originally a natural and just reaction against the absolute predominance of the employers over labour. But it had degenerated into a systematic attack on the very principles of capitalist society and of private property. In Italy, especially, it had assumed anarchical forms, menacing the nation's civilization with dissolution and creating a feeling of savage class-hatred between employers and employed, indeed between the working masses and the other classes. The great labour organizations, dominated by the advocates of a political and social revolution, set themselves up as arbiters of the nation's life, and at the same time they expressed utter

indifference to, and even contempt for, the idea of the nation, and declared themselves ready to support the enemies of Italy if it were necessary for what they professed to believe was the good of the workers of Italy. The unions formed, indeed, a series of *imperia in imperio*, and a large section of the population was dominated by irresponsible but all-powerful politicians and union leaders. The civil service itself was by no means unaffected by this movement. Labour was not wholly a monopoly of the Socialists, and if the organizations of a Socialist tendency predominated, there were also unions of a more definitely revolutionary or Communist tinge, White or Catholic unions, which after the war often vied with the Red unions in truculence and revolutionary spirit, and other unions professing to be non-political. The General Confederation of Labour, which was the most important of all, had contracted an alliance with the Socialist Party, although it was not definitely absorbed into it; the alliance was abrogated in 1922, but continued to exist *de facto*. The various unions competed against each other for control over the working masses, and each aspired to become their sole representative in dealing with the employers and with the State. The co-existence of these different unions was by no means beneficial to the workers as a whole, and often proved advantageous to the employers, who could play off one against the other, but it was deleterious, above all, to the consumers.

The State, which should have held the balance between the contending parties in the interest of the whole community, at best kept the ring for the fight, but usually threw in the weight of its authority in favour of the most powerful group, regardless of the rights and wrongs of the case. It even differentiated between the various unions and labour groups according to the political pull which each one could dispose of. Thus a labour dispute in Sicily or Calabria, caused by the wretched economic conditions of the peasantry in those provinces, disturbed the Government much less than a strike of the highly paid masons and marble-workers employed on the monument to Victor Emmanuel in Rome, because the latter enjoyed the protection of numerous Socialist deputies, while the former did not.

Fascism alone grasped the essence of the labour problem, and realized that one of its first tasks was to wean the workers from revolutionary Socialism and prove that the defence of their interests was not necessarily identified with the movement to destroy the civilization of Italy. It was the vigorous Fascist campaign against the Red syndicates of the Po valley, which were at once the most revolutionary and economically the most powerful and ruled whole provinces, which brought Fascism suddenly face to face with the labour problem. Many of the workers were tiring of the oppression of the Red unions, which promised a new heaven on earth for all, but as a rule only provided it for the privileged few, and also of the constant ferment in which they were kept and the endemic strikes which more than neutralized any possible benefits which might accrue to them through labour agitations. Throughout the latter part of 1920 and all 1921 and 1922, the Fascist campaign against the revolutionary unions proceeded with ever-increasing success. The Fascists claimed that the rights and aspirations of the workers could perfectly well be realized without destroying or plundering any other class, that the nation is a single unit with interests of its own to be defended against those of other nations, that its various classes, of which there are not two, but many, must collaborate for the common good and in the competition for international trade.

In the Po valley the first Fascist labour organizations arose, as an extension of the Fascist political movement, and they proceeded to settle a number of labour disputes by conciliatory means, and facilitated the acquisition of land by the peasantry, without strikes or disorders, and on conditions favourable to both parties in the transactions. At first these unions existed side by side with the others, although the Fascist syndicates rapidly increased their membership, whereas that of the Red and White unions declined. Certain classes of workers, such as those employed in the metallurgical and mechanical trades, still adhered to their old unions, which were of a Socialist character, while the printers' union, which was professedly non-political and had always been well managed, continued to flourish. But in most other trades the membership of the older unions fell off considerably. Not all the

workers who dropped out of the Red unions joined the Fascist ones, as many had lost faith in trade unionism in general since it had degenerated into a mere political and money-extracting organization. On the other hand, considerable numbers of workers who had never joined any union at all now joined the Fascist organizations. "Only with masses absorbed into the life and history of the nation," Mussolini declared, on the eve of the March on Rome, "can we have a foreign policy."

The employers, as we have seen, were not averse to the co-existence of several types of labour unions. But the more far-sighted manufacturers realized that in the long run it was better for industry and for the country as a whole that political revolutionary unions should disappear and give place to organizations concerned exclusively with the general betterment of the workers' conditions. As for the unions of the employers themselves, the older non-Fascist ones continued to exist, and for a time their members were reluctant to leave them, as, being non-political, they comprised all the employers of a particular category. But in the end they became or were absorbed into Fascist unions, even though comprising, like the labour unions, non-Fascist members.

There had at one time been a scheme for the creation of unions comprising both employers and employees. But in practice this plan proved unworkable, and each union comprised only employers or employees; later, unions of experts, clerks, farm bailiffs, etc., were added. Occasionally, mixed commissions comprising representatives of employers and workers were formed for a particular purpose, but each group retained its autonomy and its own representative organs.

I need not dwell on the successive transformations of the syndical system previous to the fundamental law of April 3rd, 1926. But while the new syndicates rapidly acquired a larger membership than all the others put together, the two principles began to gain ground that it was better to have a single type of union only, and that classes must no longer be allowed to take justice into their own hands any more than individuals, justice being entrusted to the State alone. These principles were eventually embodied in legislation.

It must be remembered that the Fascist movement—and this is its great strength—has never been associated with any particular class. Its opponents, especially in foreign countries, try to make out that it is a reactionary party, supported by capitalists, aristocrats, and militarists, intent on grinding down the workers. But this assertion is devoid of all foundation, as the party comprises persons of all classes and conditions. The original group formed by Benito Mussolini in 1919 in Milan, was, of course, too small to provide a criterion of its composition, but as the movement expanded, it found its chief supporters among the middle classes and the peasantry, with young men from the universities as leaders—a formation not unlike that of the army during the war. But it contained representatives of the aristocracy, of the industrial working class, and of the intellectuals as well, while its chief opponents were to be found among those same classes, with the possible exceptions of the intellectuals and the peasants, of whom there was only a very small number among the anti-Fascists.

Fascism alone realized that the problem of the organization of the various groups of producers—producers is the word used, as Fascism does not admit class warfare—was by no means identical with revolution, social and national disintegration, or even the abolition of the capitalist system and private ownership of property, which experience has, indeed, proved to be a necessary condition of progress and prosperity. In a country like Italy, poor in natural resources, the problem is one of increased and improved production. It is not a question of rich and poor classes, but rather one of how a country poor as a whole, with but few rich people, and none of those very rich, can compete with other countries more fortunately situated. Italian Fascist syndicalism, therefore, insists on the solidarity of all classes within the nation, rather than on conflicting interests between classes.

These tendencies first found expression in the great reduction of strikes since Fascism began to acquire influence. More and more labour disputes were settled amicably through the mediation of the Fascist syndicates and party, even before Fascism came into power. In 1922, there were only 575 strikes, with 422,773 strikers, and a loss

of 6,916,914 working days, as compared with 1,134 strikes, 723,862 strikers, and 8,110,063 lost working days in 1921; the figures for 1920 were 2,070, 2,313,685, 30,569,218; and those for 1919, 1,871, 1,554,566, 22,213,746. After October, 1922, the reduction was still more remarkable. In 1923, the figures were 200, 66,213, 296,462; in 1924, 260, 73,013, 523,761; and in 1925 strikes fell to almost nothing at all.

But the Fascist Government was determined to go still further, and to bring the employers' and workers' unions within the orbit of the State, so as to preclude any possibility of a return of the situation existing when those unions were outside, indifferent, or actively hostile to the State and the nation. It also determined to substitute class collaboration on a legal basis for class war. This involved a radical transformation of the whole system, destined, in its turn, to affect even the method of Parliamentary representation and consequently the Constitution itself.¹

The first phase of the reform was the creation, organization and disciplining of the Fascist syndicates, which was effected gradually by successive enactments. The second was the so-called Pact of Palazzo Vidoni (the headquarters of the Fascist Party) of October 2nd, 1925. On that date, under the auspices of the Government and the Fascist Party, the employers' and workers' federations concluded an agreement whereby the two bodies undertook to recognize each other as the sole legitimate representatives of their respective categories for the purposes of negotiating collective agreements. The chief opposition to this agreement proceeded, it should be noted, from a part of the employers rather than from the workers. The third phase was the law of April 3rd, 1926, which provided for the legal recognition of one type of syndicate and for the so-called magistracy of labour. This law and the regulations for its application are now in force. The chief provisions are the following:

1. A syndicate, in order to secure legal recognition, must comply with certain conditions—viz., an employers' syndicate must comprise persons employing at least 10 per cent. of the workers in the particular trade and locality concerned, and a workers' syndicate must comprise at least 10 per cent. of the workers in the trade and locality. The objects which

¹ A. Rocco, *Le trasformazione dello Stato*, p. 395.

a syndicate must pursue are not exclusively of an economic nature, but also comprise assistance and education of a professional, moral, and national character, and it must offer guarantees of efficiency, morality and patriotism.

The percentage fixed may seem small in countries where trade unionism is more developed than it is in Italy. But 10 per cent. would have represented a very considerable proportion of organized labour under the old *régime* of a multiplicity of unions. Membership of many of the Fascist syndicates is well above that percentage, and in some trades it comprises almost 100 per cent. of the total. Moreover, as Signor Mussolini stated in a speech in the Senate on the syndical law on March 11th, 1926, the members of the old unions were always a small minority; they tended to expand when an agitation was initiated and to contract again when it was over, whatever the outcome may have been, while the payment of subscriptions was very irregular, except when, as in the case of the shipping federation, the employers had been forced to withhold the fees from the men's wages and pay them directly over to the union. Thus, of the 40,000 metallurgical workers of Milan, only 4,000 were registered members of their union, and only 600 paid up regularly. The one essential requisite for admission to a Fascist syndicate is good conduct from a moral and patriotic point of view. This by no means excludes non-Fascists, as membership of the party is independent of the syndicates; the members of the party are under a million, and for the present no new members are admitted, whereas those of the syndicates are about 3,000,000 and are growing daily. Only persons of notoriously anti-patriotic and revolutionary activities are excluded, the number thus involved being a tiny percentage of the total number of workers.

2. Syndicates are not necessarily limited to employers and workers, but, as we have seen, they can also be formed of technical experts, clerks, etc., and even of professional men, artists, men of letters, etc. Where organizations of such categories exist, as in the case of doctors, lawyers, engineers, etc., they become automatically syndicates under the new model, subject to certain revisions of their statutes to bring them into line with the new law.

3. The syndicates of experts, clerks, etc., and the mixed commissions have already been mentioned.

4. Only one syndicate for each category of employers, workers, experts, professional men, etc., in each district may receive legal recognition. As only one syndicate can legally represent the category in question, it follows that it represents the whole category, and that it can levy contributions on all persons comprised within the category, as all benefit alike by its activities and especially by the collective agreements concluded. Registered members are sometimes expected to pay additional contributions, and this fact makes a certain number of workers hesitate to register; but the advantages secured by membership, such as the possibility of exercising greater influence on the policy of the syndicate will in the end no doubt overcome such hesitation. The annual fee levied on each worker corresponds to about a day's wages per annum. Under the pre-Fascist syndicates the contributions were much higher; they varied from 3 lire per month for the tramwaymen, to 5 lire for the electrical employés, besides the fees due to the confederation. The metal workers, textile workers, builders, agricultural labourers, had to pay fees varying from 40 to 90 lire per annum, and these fees only covered the resistance funds—*i.e.*, those destined for the organization of strikes and, in general, the struggle against the employers; there were additional fees for assistance, insurance, unemployment, etc., and for the expenses of the *cantine sociali* (workmen's public-houses), which constituted direct incitements to drunkenness. Printers paid 2 lire 60 a week to the central fund of their federation, plus 3 or 4 lire a week to the local sections—*i.e.*, 282 to 343 lire a year. Further, the Chambers of Labour levied another 10 lire a year from the town workers and 5 from the rural labourers. The only merit of the old system was that, as we have seen, many workers failed to pay their fees and there were not always the means to enforce payment. On the other hand, there was a good deal of irregularity in these levies, some men being obliged to pay in full, while others escaped wholly or in part. To-day all the workers pay their subscriptions, except certain classes of casual labourers, especially in agriculture. There was also, under the old system, a great deal of peculation in the management of the funds, and many trade union organizers found in them a means of getting rich quick. When Signor Bucco, the former Red dictator

of Bologna disappeared, a deficit of several hundred thousand lire in the trade union funds entrusted to him came to light.

5. Other syndicates are not excluded by the law, and may exist side by side with the recognized syndicates, but as *de facto* organizations without the right of legally representing their members. In practice such syndicates have almost ceased to exist, or, at all events, are wholly without importance. The advantages from the worker's point of view of the existence of a single union are obvious.

6. The recognized syndicate is subject to State control, and consequently enjoys State protection. The president and secretary, chosen by the members of the syndicate, must be approved by the proper authorities, who also exercise vigilance over the activities of the syndicate in order to prevent it from acting *ultra vires*, making improper use of its funds, or otherwise violating the law. They may even, in certain cases, dissolve the executive, and in more serious ones withdraw legal recognition.

7. Some syndicates may not receive legal recognition at all. These are, in the first place, syndicates of employees of the State, the provincial and municipal administrations, and of public charitable institutions and certain other public bodies, as the relations between employer and employed are, in these cases, of so peculiar a nature as to render the existence of a legally recognized syndicate incompatible with administrative law and practice. In the past, such syndicates did exist, and although there was then no question of legal recognition, they acted as seditious organizations for blackmailing the Government or administration by whom their members were paid by means of threats of strikes, sabotage, or even public demonstrations, always supported by the most revolutionary Socialist deputies, if their demands for betterment, reasonable or otherwise, were not immediately complied with. Ministers were howled at and insulted in their own departments by their own civil servants, egged on by a handful of agitators. Under the new law some categories are precluded from forming even *de facto* syndicates; this is the case of those of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, the Interior, the Colonies, and of the officers of the fighting services.

Another class of syndicates which may not receive legal

recognition are those which, without having obtained the authorization of the Government, place themselves in a position of subordination towards international organizations. In the past, a number of Italian labour unions took orders from foreign organizations and were, therefore, apt to bring pressure to bear on their own Government by means of international action, while these so-called international unions often acted in the interests and under the inspiration of some particular foreign Government. It was natural that with the stronger sense of nationalism existing in Italy to-day such subordination to foreign dictation should no longer be tolerated. Some other countries besides Italy are discovering to their cost what it means to have their working masses obeying the orders of foreign organizations. It is, however, untrue, as has been stated in some quarters, that the new labour law precludes Italian unions from forming part of international unions; all that it prescribes is that in order to do so the Italian union must first obtain the authority of the Italian Government, as otherwise legal recognition will not be granted to it. The principle adopted in Italy is that there can be only one Italian foreign policy—that of the Italian Government—and that that policy can only be conducted by the Government, which is alone responsible. In actual fact, the Italian unions collaborate with those of other countries through the International Labour Organization of Geneva.

8. Collective labour agreements concluded by legally recognized syndicates are applicable to all employers, workers, experts, clerks, professional men, etc., of the category concerned, including those who are not members of the syndicate. This, as even non-members enjoy the benefits of such contracts, is the reason why they are expected to pay syndicate fees. Such agreements must be published in order to be valid, just as laws must be published; they are indeed, to all intents and purposes, laws. Employers who fail to respect them are held responsible both to their own union and to that of the workers with whom the bargain was concluded. For this purpose all syndicates are obliged to set aside at least one-tenth of their contributions every year for the formation of a fund destined to cover such responsibilities.

The total membership of the workers' syndicates, civil

servants, postal and railway employees, etc., was, in October, 1928, over 4,000,000. No pre-existing union ever had so large a membership, and if the movement has not assumed even wider proportions it is due to the reluctance of a considerable part of the Italian population to join any union at all. The unions are more developed in the North than in the South, in cities and in industrial centres than in the rural areas, and this was the case also in pre-Fascist times. This reluctance is also due to the experiences of the past; men from whom large union fees had been extorted by organizations which did them no good and which have now even ceased to exist, so that their funds are all lost, hesitate to join the new syndicates, because even if they must pay a minimum fee to them, by not joining them they are exempt from the additional contributions. But this reluctance is being gradually overcome, more rapidly in the industrial centres than among the rural population, which has always been less accustomed to the union spirit. Then there is, of course, a certain amount of opposition on the part of men who for political reasons are opposed to the new system, but their numbers are small and dwindling. There is, perhaps, a danger that a certain number of such men will join the syndicates and permeate them with their ideas and mentality. Some of the leaders and secretaries of the syndicates are possibly tarred with that brush; but in time this danger will be attenuated, as the new system and the new ideas come to be ever more generally accepted. Other criticisms are also sometimes made against the system by persons inspired by considerations of various kinds, and one occasionally hears complaints that they do not "deliver the goods." But we must remember that the system is still in the embryo stage and not fully developed.

The syndicates are both on a territorial and a professional basis. Each category of persons engaged in a particular occupation and residing in a given commune may be formed into a local syndicate. The syndicates of all the communes of a province or region form a provincial or regional federation, and the various federations are grouped in a national confederation. There are also other units variously grouped according to circumstances. The Fascist programme provides, further, for the formation of the corporations, six in number, each of which will comprise all

the syndicates of a particular trade or occupation—employers', workers', experts', and clerks' syndicates—each category being adequately represented within the corporation. The corporations will be—agriculture, credit, commerce, maritime transport, land transport, and industry. As yet these bodies have not been constituted; temporarily, the inter-syndical committees fulfil some of their functions, with this difference, that the corporations will be State organs, whereas the syndicates are trade unions of a public character. The chief function of the corporation will be to co-ordinate the activities of the various syndicates.

The whole syndical activity of the country centres round the Ministry of Corporations, a newly created *département*, of which the Minister is Signor Mussolini himself, with Signor Giuseppe Bottai as Under-Secretary. Most of the staff are officials of other Ministries, some definitely seconded from them, others acting in an advisory capacity, and the total personnel, including typists, etc., is well under 100. The task of the Ministry is to co-ordinate and discipline the work of the syndicates, federations, confederations, and eventually of the corporations, and promote collective agreements where the various organizations cannot agree of themselves, and give approval to and provide for the publication of the contracts actually concluded, approve the statutes of the various unions, etc. The whole system is still in process of evolution, and it will require time before it can be said to be in full operation. Even the system of political representation is, as we have seen, based largely on the syndical organization.

An interesting point in connection with the new syndical system is the attitude towards it assumed by the leaders of the old General Confederation of Labour. Many of those leaders have already been absorbed into the syndicates, but the executive still refused to adhere to them. In August, 1922, after the collapse of the general strike, the G.C.L. broke off its alliance with the Socialist Party and declared itself to be a non-political organization. It rapidly lost importance, but continued to eke out a precarious existence as a *de facto* body, until early in 1927, the executive decided to close down. The executive declared that the Fascist syndical movement was a fact which could not be gainsaid, and, while adhering to the old principles of the G.C.L., it

realized that at the present time the Fascist syndicates offered the best prospects for the working classes. It expressed the belief that the Government had created so vast a labour organization that in the end it would be dominated by it and thus the postulates of the G.C.L. would finally be accepted and applied. In conclusion, it decided on the dissolution of the G.C.L. itself. The decision was signed by the various leaders, including the veteran Ludovico D'Aragona.¹

The second very important principle of Fascist syndical policy is the creation of the labour courts, provided for in the same law of April 3rd, 1926. Measures of a similar nature have been enacted before in other countries, but none of them have dealt with the matter so radically; they have usually taken the form of introducing a system of arbitration, sometimes of a partly compulsory character, but the defect of the arbitral system is that the arbiters' decisions are for the most part in the nature of a compromise rather than of a legal sentence. In practice, the system has by no means proved a complete success.

According to the traditional Liberal theory, the conditions of labour—wages, hours, etc.—could only be established as a result of the law of supply and demand. This principle was accepted without question in the early days of industrial development; but later it ceased to be fully operative, and the conditions of labour came to be determined more and more by the political and economic power of the organizations concerned, either of the employers or the workers. When the employers' organization was wealthy and exercised great political influence, the workers had no chance of victory in a labour dispute; but when

¹ A few days later Signor D'Aragona issued a statement to the Press from Paris, where he happened to be residing, denying that he had ever signed the document in question. The *démenti* caused some surprise at the time, but the episode was soon forgotten, and when, some months later, the decision was republished, D'Aragona's signature again appeared on it, and no further denial was issued. What had happened was that Signor D'Aragona really had signed the document, but when his name first appeared several "Fuorusciti" violently attacked him in his hotel and would have murdered him or inflicted serious injury on him but for the timely intervention of the hotel staff. This assault so alarmed D'Aragona that for the sake of his own safety, which was seriously menaced, he issued the denial.

the trade unions became all-powerful it was they who could bring pressure to bear on the Government, secure its support, and force the employers to give way. In both cases the outcome was independent of the rights and wrongs of the dispute, of the cost of production, and the real needs of the workers. In Italy under the various post-war Governments, when strikes were endemic and proclaimed on any pretext or no pretext, the authorities were usually on the side of the strikers simply because of their political pull. While all Italy realized the immense harm which this state of labour war had produced and the grave injury it wrought to the workers themselves, whether it took the form of strikes or lockouts, the Fascists were the first to propose and adopt a real remedy.

As I said before, the number of strikes and lockouts had been rapidly diminishing since October, 1922, and sundry enactments proclaimed the illegality of such suspensions of work when promoted for political purposes or if they broke out in the essential public services. But the new law laid down the principle that they were illegal in all cases. The accepted theory is that when a dispute arises between employer and employed and cannot be settled by conciliation, the State must decide by means of its properly appointed representatives—the judges—just as it does in the case of disputes between private individuals. In labour disputes the decisions of the court cannot always be based, as they are in disputes of the latter nature, on purely legal considerations, but must take into account the general interests of production—*i.e.*, of the consumer and the country at large. It is essentially a law for the defence of the average citizen. This principle is not wholly new in Italian jurisprudence. The Commercial Code (Article 544) provides that in a dispute between owners of land to whom the water supply may be necessary, the judge must conciliate the interests of agriculture and production with those of the rights of property. The law provides that when a labour dispute concerning either the interpretation of an existing contract or a demand for new conditions cannot be amicably settled through the ordinary organs created for that purpose, it must be referred to a labour court. These courts are established in every court of appeal district as special sections of the local court of appeal, and are com-

posed of three judges, to whom two assessors are attached, one an expert on labour problems and one an expert on production, neither of whom must have any personal interest in the dispute in question. The assessors are selected from a panel existing in every court of appeal district. Where there is no law or custom having force of law applicable to the particular case, the court must consider and be inspired by the general interest of the community; its decisions must be consequently based on law and equity. It follows that both strikes and lockouts are illegal, and that persons who promote or participate in them are liable to penalties; these are more severe in the case of lockouts than in that of strikes, while they are, of course, more severe on promoters than on participants, and additional penalties are applied if the strike or the lockout is promoted in order to bring pressure to bear on the Government or other public bodies, or if it is of a political nature. This last point is important, because in pre-Fascist Italy, whenever the Socialists or Communists, or, indeed, any group of agitators, wished to protest against some political action of the Italian Government, in some instances even against that of a foreign Government, a general strike would be ordered, regardless of the injury wrought thereby to hundreds of thousands of unoffending people. We have seen how on July 20th and 21st, 1919, a general strike was called throughout Italy to protest against the policy of the Western Powers in support of the "Whites" of Russia and Hungary.

But the fundamental principle is that a dispute between an employer or group of employers and a body of workers must never be allowed to degenerate into a suspension of production, in which the sufferers are not only the parties directly interested, but the community at large, which is wholly unconnected with the dispute. The injury suffered by third parties is, indeed, far more serious and direct in these cases than it would be if individuals were allowed to take justice into their own hands in private quarrels.

As yet only very few cases have come before the new courts—one a dispute between the Lombard rice-growers and their labourers, another between the shipowners and the dock labourers of the port of Genoa. In both instances the employers demanded a reduction of wages in view of the im-

provement in the value of the currency and the consequent economic crisis; in the first case the court awarded a small reduction, in the latter it refused to allow any reduction at all. These decisions are still of a somewhat tentative nature, and that in the case of the *mondarisi* was rather a compromise than a decision based purely on law and equity. But in time a new jurisprudence and a new legal *forma mentis* will no doubt arise in harmony with the new spirit in the relations between capital and labour. The Italian judiciary, which has many admirable qualities, and has always been distinguished for its fairness and impartiality, is still somewhat hide-bound by the traditions of the jurisprudence of the past; it will require some time before it becomes thoroughly steeped in the new doctrines which lie behind the syndical organization.

The next phase of the new labour policy is the Labour Charter, issued on April 21st, 1927, the Birthday of Rome. The decision to draft this document was taken by the Fascist Grand Council on January 6th, 1927, when a resolution was voted to the effect that a charter embodying the rights and duties of labour be enacted, to be based on the solidarity of the various factors of production in the higher interests of the country, on the co-ordination of the various prudential laws and other provision for the protection and assistance for the working classes, and on the general regulations for labour contracts. Signor Mussolini himself, as Premier, Minister of Corporations, and chief of the Fascist party, was entrusted with the task of laying down the guiding principles of the Charter, after taking the advice of the other Ministers concerned, and of the General Secretary of the party. On February 11th, 1927, at a meeting held at the Ministry of Corporations, Signor Bottai, the Under-Secretary of that department, communicated the Premier's decisions as to the main points for the work of the experts.

"By means of the institution of the central corporative organs," it was declared, "Fascism is the first *régime* which appreciates the worker at his true value, summoning him to participate in the regulation of production, not in the control of individual enterprises, as was demanded by anarchical syndicalism, but in the control of the whole national economic enterprise. This control constitutes both a right and a duty for the worker, obliging him to sub-

ordinate his economic demands to the actual capacity of the said national enterprise. More than this, within the orbit of this right and this duty—viz., within the orbit of the Fascist State corporation—the development of a new economy is promoted, of which the individual features cannot yet be determined, but which is already being outlined under the action of the collective labour contract, and will become more definite through the co-ordinating action of the syndicates and corporative organs.”

A questionnaire was issued to the syndical organizations and to numerous experts, who in due course sent in their replies, and at the meeting of the Fascist Grand Council on April 21st, the Charter, preceded by a report of Signor Bottai, was published. The Under-Secretary for Corporations stated that the Charter was not merely a technical or legal draft, but the expression of the will of the new organ created by the Fascist revolution and the basis, not only of a juridical tendency, but of the new mode of life of the whole body politic.

The Charter consists of thirty articles, and is divided into four sections—viz., I., the Corporative State (Articles 1 to 8); II., the collective labour agreement and the minimum guarantees for labour (9 to 21); III., employment offices (22 to 25); and IV., prudential assistance, education, and instruction (26 to 30).

Article 1 declares that “the Italian nation is an organism with aims, life, and means of action superior in power and duration to those of individuals either taken singly or united in groups composing it. It is a moral, political and economic unit, which finds its full realization in the Fascist State.”

2. “Labour, in all its intellectual, technical, and manual forms, is a social duty. As such, and only as such, is it protected by the State.”

The protection of the State is thus extended to labour, rather than to the individual worker—*i.e.*, to the whole mass of human activity constituting work. The State distributes and equalizes rights and duties, and to the duty which it imposes on the individual—the duty to work—it confers the corresponding protection which legally is for the individual a right. There is no direct sanction for this duty, no legal obligation to work, but if the individual

wishes the State to protect and assist him he must work for that protection and assistance.

The second paragraph of the same article states that "production as a whole is a single entity from the national point of view; its aims are unified and may be summed up in the welfare of the individual and in the development of national power." This is another cardinal principle of Fascism—the national unity of production. The nation aims at the development of production, not merely for the sake of economic conquest in itself, but to secure national power in its fullest significance.

Syndical or professional organization is free, but only the properly recognized syndicates, subject to the control of the State, is legally entitled to represent the whole category of employers or workers for which it has been created, to stipulate collective labour agreements binding on all persons belonging to that category, to levy contributions on the category, and to exercise over its members the functions of public interest with which it has been invested.

Article 3 repeats the provisions of the law concerning the functions and privileges of the legally recognized syndicates, while Article 4 states that in the collective labour agreement the solidarity of the various elements of production finds expression by the conciliation of contrasting interests and their subordination to the higher interests of production.

The functions of the labour courts are restated in Article 5.

Article 6 defines the relative position and functions of the two organs of the Corporative State—the professional association and the Corporation. The former "assures the legal equality of employers and workers, maintains the discipline of production, and promotes its improvement," while the Corporation constitutes the unifying organ of productive forces and represents their interests as a whole. The syndicate has no authority over individuals or their productive activity outside the category for which it was created, whereas the Corporations, which are State organs, "are entitled to enact regulations of a binding character on the discipline of labour relations and on the co-ordination of production whenever they have had the necessary powers conferred on them by the associated syndicates."

As I have said before, the Corporations are not yet constituted, but in the course of formation.

Article 7 reaffirms the value of private enterprise in the field of production "as the most efficient and useful instrument in the interest of the nation." But private enterprise for production is a function of national interest, and has, therefore, responsibilities towards the State.

Another duty is imposed on employers inasmuch as they are grouped in syndicates—viz., that of promoting the increase and improvement of production and the reduction of costs (Article 8). They must also help to promote the development of art and science and to attain the moral aims of the corporative *régime*.

Article 9 provides that "the intervention of the State in economic production shall only take place when private enterprise is lacking or inadequate, or when the political interests of the State are involved. This intervention may take the form of control, encouragement, or direct management." This clause has been misrepresented by certain critics,¹ who assert that the Corporative State is merely a form of nationalization or State Socialism. The provision, however, merely means that where private enterprise is unable to provide for certain necessary services, or when important public interests are involved, the State (or the province or the municipality) must come forward and make good the deficiency by grants in aid or subsidies, or in some cases run the service itself. Examples of this form of State intervention abound in all countries. On the other hand, certain public services formerly run by the State have now been entrusted to private enterprise; a case in point is the telephone service, which has been entrusted to a group of private companies each operating in one area, the State retaining for itself only the trunk lines between different cities. The improvement resulting therefrom has been very considerable.

Articles 12 and 13 are very important inasmuch as they lay down the principles for fixing wages in relation to industrial income. The syndicates, the Corporations acting as organs of conciliation, and the decisions of the courts shall establish the proportion between wages, the neces-

¹ See, for instance, an article in *The Times* of September 16, 1927.

sities of life, the capacity of production, and the output of labour. The actual measure of wages is not based on any general rule, but is left to the agreement of the parties in collective contracts. No artificial limitation is placed on the income of capital or of labour; the law is based on supply and demand, without the intervention of political considerations, and apportions in as fair a manner as possible among all the factors of production the consequences of a crisis and the benefits of general prosperity. The data for establishing this measure and for gauging the state of the money market or the variations in the standard of life of the workers are supplied by the public authorities, the Central Institute of Statistics, and the professional associations, and collated by the Ministry of Corporations.

Articles 14 to 21 lay down the conditions of labour. The principle of a day of rest on Sundays and on certain other civil and religious festivals, annual holidays (during which the worker has a right to full wages), and compensation for wrongful dismissal are set forth in definite terms; the transfer of a concern to a new owner does not bring labour contracts to an end, nor can a worker be dismissed in case of illness not exceeding a certain period, nor on account of his being summoned to serve in the army or the militia. Collective labour agreements are also applicable to work performed at home. Wages for piece work must be so fixed as to enable an industrious worker of normal capacity for work to secure minimum earnings over and above the basic wage.

Many of these principles already find their place in the chief collective labour agreements, of which a large number have now been concluded, and to-day their inclusion is obligatory. The novelty of the system lies in the fact that they are laid down as rules of positive law, and become measures of public policy, which cannot be divorced from these contracts. Also these principles, which obtain in the more advanced industrial areas, are extended to all workers in all parts of Italy, to all industries, including the home or cottage industries.

Articles 22 and 23 deal with unemployment and employment offices. Employers must select their workers through the employment offices, which are established on a joint employers' and workers' basis, and are under the super-

vision of the State corporative organs. This might appear to institute an undue interference by the State in the freedom of selection by the employer, but as on the employment offices and other corporative organs both employers and workers are equally represented, there need be no fear of undesirable effects; in practice no drawbacks of this kind have occurred. The only political principle laid down is that the employment offices should give preference to workers belonging to the Fascist party or the syndicates. But as the syndicates are open to all workers, except those of notoriously revolutionary activities or involved in anti-patriotic plots, this principle is merely part of the Fascist conception of civic duty; the employers themselves would naturally give preference to workers not connected with seditious movements, if for no other reason because workers playing an active part in such movements have always been notoriously the worst, laziest, most insubordinate, and incompetent, who only succeeded in the past in finding and keeping their jobs because the employers were blackmailed and terrorized into employing them by the Red organizations, or sometimes even recommended to do so by the authorities.

Articles 25 to 28 establish the rules governing the duties and activities of the corporative organs and trade unions in the field of insurance against accidents, unemployment, maternity, professional diseases, and prudential assistance.

The last two articles (29 and 30) state that it is the right and the duty of the professional associations to assist all the persons they represent, whether they be registered members or not, and that one of the chief duties of these associations is the education, particularly that of a technical character, of all the persons represented by them.

The Labour Charter is, it will be seen, not a code, but a statement of the basic principles of the Corporate State and of the rules by which the conduct of the body politic in the field of production must be inspired. In some cases, the rules set forth in this document have already been applied, the Charter merely generalizing them; in others, it has established new principles which are now beginning to find application; in other cases, again, the principles are declarations of future policy which will be carried out only when the whole system of the Corporate State comes into

being and all the corporations are functioning (this is particularly the case with the provisions under Section IV.).

There are, of course, still many difficulties to be overcome, and many aspects of the system are still only in the experimental stage and consequently liable to modification and improvement. One of the difficulties is that of finding suitable men to fill the posts of secretaries and other officials of the unions. In the past it was the most violent and seditious agitators who secured the appointments, and once they were appointed it was their interest to keep up and promote perpetual labour agitations, as otherwise Othello's occupation would be gone. To-day a very different type of man is wanted, but one not always easy to find. Under the new system it is alleged that some of the secretaries and other officials are too highly paid as compared with the regular civil servants. This may be partly true, but the rate of pay in Italy is so small that even if these men are better paid than other officials the harm is not very great. A more serious drawback is that these officials should become too numerous, as their appointments and salaries do not yet come under the rigid discipline of the *Corte dei Conti* and the *Ragioneria Generale*, as is the case with civil servants. But the Ministry of Corporations is looking into the matter, and a limit will probably be put to the number of appointments made. In some cases the leaders and secretaries of the old unions have changed their colours and secured jobs under the new system; occasionally these men have proved useful and efficient, but the change of heart has not always been as complete as might be desired, and some of them have brought, if not their old principles, at least their old intellectual baggage with them into the Fascist syndicates. The authorities are, of course, alive to this danger and on the watch to ward against it, but it is not always possible to do so as thoroughly as would be desirable. An educational centre for syndical secretaries has been recently opened and is giving good results; if it continues to do so other similar institutions will be created.

The Fascist syndical system set itself the task of organizing the producing classes—*i.e.*, practically the whole nation—with the object of a general improvement of material and moral conditions. It cannot too often be repeated that time will be required before the extent of

its achievement may be gauged. But even now it has attained some by no means unimportant results. In the first place, it has tended to equalize wages between the various parts of Italy. Whereas in the North a very considerable improvement had already been attained and wages were comparatively high, in the South more primitive conditions prevailed and the workers were still, to a large extent, sweated on inadequate wages. Fascism set itself to raise the conditions of the South so that they should at all events approach those of the more progressive North. One real success which it has registered is that it has brought about collective agreements for agricultural labour in Sicily, in which all other Governments and parties had failed. Another success is that it has subjected piece work, which represents a very important part of the Italian workers' earnings, to the corporative *régime*, whereas in the past only fixed wages were the object of collective agreements, piecework pay being at the discretion of the employer. Apart from wages, the new system has introduced other improvements into collective agreements, such as unemployment insurance and benefit funds.

But we should not forget that the system began to come into force at a moment of general crisis, not only in Italy, but in Europe. In Italy, in particular, deflation and then the stabilization of the currency, which was indispensable to restore the economic situation on a sound basis, led to fall in values, and it was necessary, in order to secure a reduction in the cost of living, to reduce paper wages. The measure of this reduction, which has been secured by agreement (several thousand collective agreements have been concluded, against only four recourses to the labour courts), ranges between 10 per cent. and 20 per cent. The fall in the cost of living has not yet quite corresponded to this reduction, but the latter is undoubtedly contributing to the former, and in time a measure of parity should be reached.

An important aspect of the system is the creation of employment offices. They will be the intermediaries, not only for employment, but also for inter-regional migrations, so that when labour is super-abundant in one province it may be directed towards other areas where it is insufficient. When an employer wishes to dismiss some of his workers

he must inform the local employment office and prove that dismissal is really an economic necessity. If he wishes to engage more labour he must do it through the employment offices, on which both he and the workers are represented. One of the tasks of the employment offices will be to reduce to a minimum any reduction of wages which the existence of a certain number of unemployed would otherwise render possible.

On May 8th, 1928, the third national congress of Fascist syndicates was held in Rome, under the chairmanship of Signor Rossoni, then president of the Fascist Syndical Confederation, one of the ablest organizers of the movement, and Signor Mussolini delivered a speech from which certain passages deserve to be quoted. "When Fascism," he stated, "gained possession of the Po valley (in 1920-21) and overwhelmed all the anti-Fascist organizations, that is to say, all the counter-revolutionary organizations—and the anti-Fascist counter-revolution extended from Anarchy to Liberalism—we found ourselves with the syndical problem on our hands. Thousands of farmers, thousands of labourers came to swell our ranks. Our opponents, our enemies, thought that those men were our prisoners. We are so sincere in our affairs, so outspoken in our admissions, that we may even admit that a part of them did not well understand whither they were going. But to-day all that is past and gone, even as a memory; to-day the rural masses of the Italian countryside are firmly devoted to the *régime*."

"More than that, this penetration, which for some years was limited to the rural masses who were in certain particular conditions, to-day has reached the so-called proletariat of the large cities. We are penetrating into circles and strongholds which appeared closed to our conquests; above all, we are penetrating into souls. The gathering of 10,000 Milanese workmen in the Colosseum must be regarded as an historic event of the first rank, inasmuch as it is the first time that working masses of the industrial proletariat have come spontaneously from afar to do homage and hearken to the words of the leader of Fascism, the leader of the Fascist revolution.¹

¹ The allusion is to the visit to Rome of 10,000 factory hands from Milan.

"I wish to give praise to the Italian working people. When I decided to save the lira, because I would not admit that the lira should become a punched tramway ticket, I knew that I should have to impose very hard sacrifices, especially on the working population, which has in its wages a margin which is less than modest. I therefore discounted this necessity with full consciousness and understanding of what I was doing. Well, to-day, when the battle of the lira may be said to be happily concluded, I must assert that the difficulties, the grumblings, the expressions of discontent came to me from all categories *except* from the masses of the Italian people. It is necessary that the Italians, that the whole world, should know that the workmen and peasants of Italy have accepted a reduction of their wages which we are proud to estimate at a milliard or two; they have, therefore, splendidly contributed their share to what were the necessities of the battle of the lira. This must not be forgotten, and shall not be forgotten. . . . Fascism . . . has not arisen for the defence of certain interests and categories, but has been a healthy movement of the Italian people, and it intends to remain a movement of the people. The whole work of the Fascist Government, even its daily routine work, the whole of its legislation has been guided by a single object—that of improving the Italian people both materially and morally. From this point of view the Fascist *régime*, which according to some is impersonated in that sinister tyrant who at the present moment has the pleasure of addressing you, is in the field of social legislation in the vanguard of all the nations, including those flying the Soviet flag or the Democratic flag. . . . Sometimes the gloomy pessimists at the street corners do not realize, and do not wish to realize, what is happening, and make criticisms and reserves on this syndical organization of the Italian working people. Well, with full knowledge of the facts, I assert that almost all the leaders of the Italian syndicalist movement are worthy of their mission and of their responsibility.

"We must react vigorously, not only against the profiteers, who think that the (Fascist) revolution can be made into a personal affair to be converted, perhaps, into a source of life income; we must react against all those who try to hitch a personal question of their own on to that vast

and complex phenomenon which is the Fascist revolution; but we must also react against all libellers, against all sedition-mongers, against all defeatists, who claim to deduce a universal rule from an episode, and through a single incident attempt to libel a whole movement.

"We must improve the quality of our masses still further, make the vital life-blood of our doctrine permeate the Italian syndical organism. . . . The present century will witness a new economic system. As the past century has witnessed the system of capitalist economy, so the present century will witness the system of corporative economy. There is no other way, my comrades, of overcoming the tragic antithesis of capital and labour, which is a cornerstone of the Marxian doctrine, which we have gone beyond. We must place capital and labour on the same footing, we must extend the same rights and duties to both. . . . That is why you are not merely syndical organizers; well before that you are Fascists, because it is only on the plane of ideas that interests can be conciliated. Interests are but a section of life, whereas we intend to embrace and harmonize the whole life of the Italian people. For this reason you must consider yourselves in every moment of the day, in every instant of your work, before small things as before great ones, soldiers of the revolution, ready to defend it, here and outside, with your arm, with your blood, with your life."

XIV

CHURCH AND STATE

IN order to appreciate the position of the Church in Italy, and its relations with the civil power, we must never forget that there is only one religion in Italy—Catholicism. Small Protestant communities exist here and there and some thousands of Jews,¹ but there are no warring creeds, and the immense majority of the population are Roman Catholics, observant or non-observant, strict or lax, while a small minority has no religion at all, but even of these only a portion call themselves expressly free-thinkers or atheists, and very few, indeed, would fail to be married in church or have their children baptized. There has never been a religious war in Italy, except the purely local episodes of the Valtellina and the Waldensian valleys in the seventeenth century, and the Reformation, even when the Church was at the lowest level of corruption, never made any appreciable headway.

But it by no means follows that Church questions—as distinguished from those of dogma—have not played a very important part in Italian affairs. Without entering into the vexed question of the donations of Constantine, Pepin, Charlemagne, and the other Emperors, of the War of the Investitures, and the struggles between Guelfs and Ghibellines, the essential fact for the student of Italian history is that the Papacy, besides being the central organ of a universal Church, also ruled over a considerable area of Italian territory in the same manner as did the various lay princes. This fact made of the Papacy a serious obstacle to the unity of Italy; the Papacy considered that it could not fulfil its Divine mission on earth unless its independence were guaranteed by the existence of a Tem-

¹ At the census of 1911 against 32,983,664 Catholics there were 123,253 Protestants, 34,234 Jews, 874,532 of no religion, and 652,404 who did not state their religion.

poral State, and it was thus brought to identify itself with the other reactionary rulers of Italy, native and foreign, in opposing the Italian Liberal movement and the idea of an Italy free, united, and independent.

That Temporal State was, moreover, at all events in the nineteenth century, worse governed than almost any other part of Italy, not excluding the Neapolitan provinces, where at all events the courts of justice were honest. The whole administration, in the hands of the clergy, was oppressive, as tyrannical as the Austrian, and infinitely more corrupt and inefficient, and by no possible sophistry could this ecclesiastical *régime* be brought into harmony with the principles of the modern State, wherein the laity are entitled to a share of the public powers. The very idea of a Constitution for the Papal States, ventilated and even attempted in practice in 1848, was the negation of the whole theory of the Church as a theocratic temporal Government.

The Italian Liberals thus found themselves involuntarily in opposition to the Church and to some extent to the Catholic religion itself. I say involuntarily, because with few exceptions they were nearly all of them Catholics and wished to remain Catholics. But it was inevitable that this political conflict with the Papacy should have driven a number of them into the ranks of the free-thinkers and even of the atheists, apart from those who for reasons of philosophic conviction had inclinations in that direction. Hostility to foreign domination and to the native tyrants to a large extent found expression in the secret societies—the Carbonari, the Freemasons, and other sects—and these were condemned by the Church for political reasons as well as for their dogmatic unorthodoxy and their blasphemous and often ridiculous ritual. Throughout the whole history of the *Risorgimento* we find this conflict between Liberalism and the Church except in the brief but momentous period in 1847-1848, when Pius IX. appeared to be really tending towards Liberalism. Although that attitude on the Pope's part was a contradiction in terms, its importance cannot be exaggerated. As Father Mura said of that event: "Pius Nonus Italiam, nolens, fecit." The conflict was fought not only between the supporters of Liberalism and those of the Papal claims, but also within the mind and spirit of a large body of Italians.

Cavour, a good Catholic himself, promoted legislation limiting the authority of the Church in civil matters, and although he realized that the time was not yet ripe for a definite solution of the Roman question, as the suppression of the Temporal Power would have encountered the hostility and might even have provoked the armed intervention of Napoleon III., he laid down two fundamental principles to be striven after—that of “a free Church in a free State,” and that of the necessity that Rome should be the capital of Italy. He did not live to see either of these desiderata attained, but before his death a large portion of the Papal States had been annexed to the Italian Kingdom, only the city and province of Rome (the Lazio) remaining under the Temporal rule of the Papacy. In that limited area the Papal authority was only able to maintain itself with the support of an army of foreign mercenaries and of Napoleon, who, although himself not a Clerical, needed Clerical support in France. The local population, with few exceptions, was definitely hostile to the Temporal Power and anxious to be united to Italy.

Various plans had been made for a peaceful and friendly solution of the conflict between Italy and the Papacy, and on more than one occasion such a solution seemed in sight, but other influences, mostly foreign, ended by prevailing. On September 20, 1870, when Napoleon was no longer in a position to raise difficulties, Rome was occupied and became the capital of united Italy.

Soon after the Italian troops had entered the city it seemed as though the two Powers might exist side by side on peaceful terms, and that again a solution was about to be arrived at; at the beginning, indeed, relations between the Italian and the Papal authorities were quite friendly. But again extreme reactionary influences intervened, and the Pope shut himself up in the Vatican, whence neither he nor any of his successors has as yet emerged.

There now began a period of peaceful hostility between Church and State, which the passage of time has attenuated but by no means eliminated. The Lanza Cabinet in December, 1870, presented to Parliament a Bill on the position of the Papacy in the Italian State known as the Law of Papal Guarantees, which after a series of lively debates was voted by both Houses, and received the Royal assent

on May 13, 1871. The law declared the person of the Pontiff to be sacred and inviolable, attributing to him the same honours as to the King, assigned him an annual allowance of 3,225,000 lire, corresponding to the civil list inscribed in the budget of the Holy See, left him in full possession and enjoyment of the Vatican and Lateran palaces and of the villa at Castel Gandolfo, full liberty for the exercise of his spiritual functions and for communication with the Catholics of the whole world, the representatives of foreign Governments accredited to the Holy See enjoying the same privileges as those extended to all diplomats according to international law, while all Catholic educational institutions in Rome and the suburban dioceses would continue under the authority of the Holy See without any control on the part of the Italian scholastic authorities. The Government waved its right of appointment of the bishops and clergy except in cases of Royal patronage, but reserved to itself the right of granting the *placet* and *exequatur* to ecclesiastics on whom benefices were conferred (chiefly bishops and parish priests). The law was never recognized by the Pope, and consequently remained a unilateral obligation; the Government undertook to observe it, but the Papacy did not consider itself bound by it. The Papacy has, however, fully availed itself of all the benefits extended to it by the law, rejecting only those which it regarded as useless or the non-recognition of which served to emphasize the existence of a conflict with the State; in particular it never drew the allowance of 3,225,000 lire, except in the case of the first instalment.

Outside of Rome relations between Church and State gradually became more normal and friendly, although there were occasional disputes between the Government and seditious ecclesiastics. The King usually received the homage of the clergy in all the other cities of Italy, and the civil and ecclesiastical authorities often cordially collaborated in social, charitable, and even patriotic initiatives. But in Rome itself there was no official intercourse between the Quirinal and the Vatican and their respective authorities. There were two diplomatic corps, and for many years Roman society was divided into the "Black" World and the "White." During the first decades of Italian rule in Rome there was much acrimonious controversy in the press

and elsewhere, the Vatican organs printing violent attacks on the Italian Government and on Italy herself, to which the Liberal and Democratic press retorted in kind. Many ecclesiastics availed themselves of their authority to conduct a violent propaganda against the "sacrilegious" Italian State. Signor Manfroni, in his admirable work, *Sulla soglia del Vaticano*, recounts the history of this period with inside knowledge and a keen sense of humour.¹ Catholics were debarred from voting at elections by the *Non expedit*, and, although many did actually vote, it was as individuals and not as members of a Catholic party. The attitude of the Vatican resulted in the creation of a sharp distinction between the Italian clergy, at all events, the clergy directly attached to the Vatican, and the rest of the nation. These ecclesiastics tended to regard themselves not as Italians, but as persons without nationality, to whom all countries were alike, and who in many cases were actually hostile to Italy.

In its conduct of foreign policy the Italian Government on more than one occasion found the Vatican influence on the side of States unfriendly to Italy, and those States seldom neglected the chance of lending support to the extreme claims of the Papacy. We have seen how Clerical influences in France and Austria affected the policy of those Powers in a sense unfavourable to Italy more than once, and even Italy's good relations with minor Powers were apt to be seriously prejudiced by such influences. On March 12, 1877, Pius IX. in an address to the Sacred College not only covered the Italian Government with violent abuse, but practically invoked the intervention of foreign arms for the restoration of the Temporal Power.

Nevertheless, several attempts were made after 1870 to bring about a reconciliation between the Italian State and the Papacy, of which one of the most notable was that associated with the name of Father Tosti, during the pontificate of Leo XIII., but always without avail. When Victor Emmanuel II. was dying, Pius allowed the sacraments to be administered to him in spite of the excom-

¹ Signor Manfroni was for twenty-five years Police Commissioner for the Borgo, the quarter of Rome in which the Vatican is situated, and the unofficial intermediary between the two Governments.

munication, and after his death the Pope said that he had died "as a King, a Christian, and a gentleman."

On the death of Pius IX. there were doubts as to whether the Conclave would be held in Rome. Certain foreign Governments broadly hinted that they would be very glad to give it hospitality within their territories, and some of the Cardinals, notably Manning, were strongly in favour of such a course. A decision to that effect was actually taken by the Sacred College. But Crispi, who was then Minister of the Interior, while giving the fullest assurances that the Conclave could be held in Italy in conditions of absolute freedom and independence, very definitely declared that, if the decision to hold it abroad were adhered to, the Cardinals would be escorted to the frontier with all the honours due to them under the Law of Guarantees, but that they would not be allowed to return, and that the Government would occupy the Sacred Palaces. The decision was consequently revoked, and the Conclave held in Rome in more peaceful circumstances than almost any previous one.

Leo XIII. never indulged in the same violent abuse of the Royal Government as his predecessor had done, but he maintained the same attitude of protest against the suppression of the Temporal Power, and continued, although with greater circumspection, to appeal to the foreign Powers, now to France and now to Austria, for support in his conflict with Italy.

This protracted dispute engendered in a large section of Italian public opinion a conviction that Clericalism was identified with anti-patriotism. Many consequently identified patriotism with anti-Clericalism, and some moved a step further from anti-Clericalism to irreligion. It had throughout the latter half of the eighteenth and most of the nineteenth centuries come to regard religion as opposed to progress, democracy, and modern ideas in general, and the anti-Italian attitude of the Papacy increased the numbers of those who took this view, adding to the ranks of the free-thinkers and atheists a number of men who were by no means irreligious, but were opposed to the political aspects of Clericalism. Hence the increasing separation between the State and the Church and the conception of the State as an institution which must ignore religion.

This attitude tended to strengthen the materialist conception of life, and hostility to political Clericalism often expanded into a sort of contempt for all spiritual values. By no means all those who opposed Clerical encroachments took this view, but for many decades the State was forced into a definitely agnostic, materialistic, positivist attitude which, independently of all dogmatic belief, found itself in contrast with idealism in general, and in the end proved even derogatory to patriotism which came to be comprised among the old-fashioned spiritual beliefs incompatible with progressive thought. Hence the tolerance extended to the rabid anti-patriotism of the Socialists and Anarchists, whose otherwise reprehensible activities were apt to be excused for the sake of their materialist conceptions and their irreligion.

The men of the Left, and afterwards the Radicals, were, as a rule, strongly imbued with anti-Clericalism, and when the Socialists first came into prominence they were also theoretically anti-Clerical and in certain parts of the country conducted a vigorous propaganda against the Church and the clergy. But it was not an essential item of their programme, and on certain occasions, such as the troubles in Milan in 1898, they appear to have co-operated with the extreme Clericals, whose leader, Don Albertario, editor of the militantly seditious *Osservatore cattolico*, was sent to prison together with the Socialist and Radical leaders, Turati, Nofri, Chiesa, etc.

Pius X., one of the most truly Christian of Popes, did not fail to renew the protest against the "usurpation" of the rights of the Church, and expressed himself in uncompromising terms against the official visit of President Loubet to "him who unjustly detains the civil Power."¹ But during his pontificate the bitterness of the conflict was much attenuated. The wave of anti-Clericalism which swept over France under the premiership of Combes, the breach in Franco-Vatican relations, the expulsion of the religious Orders and the confiscation of their property, and the extension of French anti-Clerical policy to the French communities abroad, especially to the Levant (in the past anti-Clericalism had always been definitely

¹ The King of Italy was always alluded to in Clerical circles as *colui che detiene*.

declared not to be an article for export), had its repercussion in Italy. Comparisons were made between Italian tolerance and French intolerance, and the Vatican, being no longer able to rely on the protection of the Eldest Daughter of the Church, came to regard Italy as a somewhat less prodigal child than it had been accustomed to do in the past. It began to realize that Italians, even when anti-Clerical, were never as uncompromising as the French, and never carried their anti-Clericalism to extremes. The ultra-Clericals had tried to create incompatibility between Catholicism and patriotism, but had failed because the majority of Italians, less rigidly logical than the French, found it possible to be both good Catholics and good citizens. Every now and then Pius X. took occasion to repeat his protests, particularly on the occasion of the festivities for the fiftieth anniversaries of Italian unity in 1911, to show the foreign Catholic world that the situation was essentially unchanged. But the dispute was regarded in a more serene and almost academic spirit.

Although a Catholic political party did not yet exist, an ever-increasing proportion of devout Catholics took part in the elections. The uncompromising *Non licet* of Pius IX. had become merely the *Nunc non expedit* of Leo XIII. Then came the permission to vote at municipal elections; on many town councils there were Catholic minorities, and in not a few the Catholics actually secured the majority. The next step was the tacit permission to vote at the Parliamentary elections, and finally, with the withdrawal of the *Non expedit* at the elections of 1913, the door was opened for the formation of a Catholic party in the Chamber. All will recollect the excitement over the so-called Gentiloni pact. At the general election of 1913, held under Signor Giolitti's auspices and resulting, as usual, in the return of a large Giolittian majority, Count Gentiloni, secretary of the Catholic group, stated in an interview in the *Giornale d'Italia* that a large number of Giolittian deputies owed their election to the votes of the Catholics, which they had secured by undertaking to oppose certain measures objectionable to Catholic sentiment; the Government on the other hand had undertaken to support those candidates who were to sit as deputies who happened to be Catholics, but not as Catholic deputies

—a distinction which could only have been excogitated by the peculiar mentality of Giovanni Giolitti,¹ combined with the elegant sophistry of the Clerical spirit. In other constituencies not covered by the Patto Gentiloni the Government supported candidates of the most startlingly unorthodox views—Freemasons and extreme anti-Clericals, Radicals, and even followers of the moderate Socialist Bissolati.

Then came the World War, which raised many grave new issues. Pius X. died soon after the outbreak of the awful catastrophe which he had striven in vain to avert. His successor Benedict XV., a man of greater learning and unidentified with any particular tendency in the Curia, proved unequal to the tasks devolving upon him during the conflict, and by his attitude of political agnosticism, which was in some ways inevitable, he alienated the peoples of the Entente countries without securing the gratitude of those of the Central Powers. He was undoubtedly opposed to Italian intervention, but from the purest motives. It was, indeed, feared in many Catholic quarters that the intervention of Italy, the Power on whose territory was the seat of the Universal Church, having adherents in both camps, would make the position of the Papacy impossible. But the conciliatory spirit and tact displayed both by the Italian Government and the Vatican eliminated all danger that an untenable situation should arise, and the Law of Guarantees functioned throughout the war without a hitch. The Italian Government declared, although some of its experts advised differently, that it would not object to the presence in Rome of the diplomats of the enemy Powers accredited to the Holy See, and it was the Pope himself who advised them to depart. Nor was any obstacle placed in the way of the visits of cardinals from enemy countries to Rome during the war to attend a consistory, and many German and Austrian ecclesiastics never left Rome.

The German and Austrian Governments, however, did attempt to exploit the Roman question for their own political purposes. Signor Salandra, in his book on Italian neutrality, tells how in November, 1914, when the prob-

¹ Giolitti was once wittily described as "a Jesuit disguised as a *carabiniere* in plain clothes."

ability of Italian intervention on the side of the Entente was becoming more probable, Herr von Flotow, the German Ambassador in Rome, hinted to him that, unless Italy maintained an attitude at least of sympathy towards Germany, the Imperial Government might be unable to resist the pressure of the Catholic Centre in favour of raising the Roman question once more; Prince von Bülow was even more explicit in warning Signor Joel, the general manager of the Banca Commerciale, in a private letter intended to reach the Government, that if Italy intervened on the side of the Entente the Temporal Power would be restored by the Central Empires after they had won the war. Herr Erzberger, the German Catholic leader, had actually drafted a scheme to that effect. It was for this reason and no other that Italy insisted on the insertion into the Pact of London of a clause explicitly excluding the Holy See from participation in the future Peace Conference. Signor Salandra adds that there was never any evidence that the Vatican itself had lent support or encouragement to the various Austro-German intrigues for the restoration of the Temporal Power.¹ Indeed, Cardinal Gasparri expressly declared on June 27, 1915, after Italy had intervened in the war: "His Holiness expects a satisfactory solution of his situation not through foreign arms, but through the triumph of those sentiments of justice, which he trusts will be ever more widespread among the Italian people, in harmony with its own true interest."²

The post-war period was characterized by the formation and development of the Partito popolare italiano. This party, which was destined to take the place of the older Clerical groups, was inspired by Christian Socialist ideals, and aimed at uniting all who believed in Catholicism, whatever their other views might be. But it had hardly come into existence when two very different tendencies appeared in its ranks—one which was mainly Catholic, Conservative, with a touch of social reform, and the other which, while professing only to wish to take the wind out of the sails of the Socialists, vied with the reddest of the Reds in its methods of violence. Certain priests were among the worst offenders, and some of them differed little

¹ Salandra, *op. cit.*, pp. 425-428.

² G. Curatulo, *La questione romana da Cavour a Mussolini*, p. 153.

from the Red leaders in their incitements to revolution. The Veneto and the provinces of Bergamo and Cremona, where the P.P. had acquired most influence, were the scenes of the most deplorable outrages. A French Catholic writer, Mlle. Aline Lion, who knows the Friuli very intimately, was horrified at the conduct of certain priests in that province. She writes that as a Roman Catholic, a friend of the peasants and an animal-lover, she could not "speak with equanimity of a party who used the priests of her own Church to speak words of violence on the steps of the altar or in the parsonage houses."¹ To give an idea of the character of some of the leaders of the P.P., she mentions a canon of the cathedral of Udine and one of the chief lieutenants of Don Sturzo in the Friuli; this man had "rejoiced over the defeat of his country at Caporetto, befriended the invaders and betrayed two women who had said to him that they were praying for the victory of the Allies, so that on his denunciation they were condemned by the Austrians."²

While Don Sturzo himself did not directly countenance violence, he never definitely condemned it (except when it was committed against members of the P.P.), and only cast the mildest blame on Signor Miglioli, the leader and organizer of the revolutionary Left wing of the party, as one would chide a wayward child.

Very rapidly the P.P. shed its Catholic character and became more and more a political party pure and simple, although many of its leaders were neither pure nor simple. But this fact tended to weaken its influence with the masses; in Italy there has always been a sense of repugnance for priests who meddle in politics—" *Il prete deve fare il prete* " is a popular dictum—and the Vatican itself was alarmed at the course followed by the Popolari, who were getting out of hand, and no longer amenable to the control of the higher ecclesiastical authorities. It was for this reason that the Vatican issued an order forbidding priests having a cure of souls to take part in politics, and later extended this prohibition to the clergy in general. When Don Luigi Sturzo finally left Italy and came to settle in England it was generally understood that this course had

¹ *The Pedigree of Fascism* (1928), p. 47.

² *Ibid.*, p. 48.

been recommended to him by his ecclesiastical superiors; except for the publication of a somewhat stodgy and unreliable volume on *Italy and Fascism* he has at least outwardly abstained from political activity. In conclusion it may be said that, except at the moment of its foundation and for a very short subsequent period, the activities of the P.P. belonged almost exclusively to politics and had nothing to do with religion or the problems of the relations between Church and State.

Shortly before the advent of the Fascist *régime* a new attempt was made to arrive at a solution of the Roman question on a basis different to that of the earlier attempts. The negotiations, if so formal a term may be used, were interrupted by the March on Rome, but resumed a few years later. The characteristic feature of the Italo-Vatican conflict in this new phase was the lack of acrimony displayed on both sides and the spirit of serenity in which the situation was examined. During the March on Rome the Vatican expressed anxiety lest the churches and religious institutions should suffer injury. But the Fascist "quadrumvirate" gave the amplest assurances that everything would be done to prevent the commission of all acts offensive to religion, and, in fact, throughout those strenuous days the Church and its ministers had nothing to complain of. Since the advent of the Fascist Government various laws and decrees have been enacted clearly showing the intention of the Duce to prove his respect for the Catholic faith and Church. The crucifix was replaced in the elementary schools and religious instruction is imparted in them. Religious processions are permitted everywhere, and take place without the slightest disturbance. The Government has been officially represented on the occasion of certain important religious functions, such as the celebrations for the sixth centenary of St. Francis of Assisi, and during the Anno Santo the Government and its organs closely collaborated with the ecclesiastical authorities and committees to facilitate the transit and sojourn of pilgrims. Here and there troubles have occurred between local groups of Fascists and certain ecclesiastics and Catholic groups and institutions, especially when the latter were connected with the P.P.; on a few occasions very regrettable attacks have been made on Catholic asso-

ciations. But apart from these incidents, which occurred almost always in small towns and villages, were immediately repressed, and were not unlike other episodes at one time fairly frequent in Italy and due to causes other than religion, relations between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities became on the whole more satisfactory than at any previous time.

A good deal has been written and said, especially abroad, about the suppression of the Catholic Boy Scouts. It should be remembered that in Italy the co-existence of two organizations for the training of youth in small towns—the Fascist Balilla and the Catholic Boy Scouts—was bound to lead to constant friction and free fights whenever parties belonging to the two organizations met. Moreover, had the two continued to co-exist there would have been a sharp division between the Catholics and the Balilla, and the latter would have ended by inevitably assuming an anti-Catholic character, whereas the authorities were anxious not to exclude the Catholic element nor the assistance of the Catholic clergy from the Balilla groups. In the larger towns this risk was less serious, and for a time the Catholic Boy Scouts continued to exist side by side with the Balilla in all towns with over 20,000 inhabitants. It was only after the polemical attitude taken up by the Vatican over the affair of the Centro Nazionale, of which more anon, that the Government decreed that all the organizations for the education of youth must come under the auspices of the Balilla, thereby implicitly providing for the disbanding of the Catholic Boy Scouts.

In the active campaign conducted against Fascism in certain circles abroad attempts have been made to prove that the movement is anti-religious, in order to secure the support in that campaign of the devout, while in other circles Fascism is held up to obloquy as the servant of the Papacy engaged in a nefarious attempt to enslave the Italian people in "obscurantist" Clerical shackles, so as to make the flesh of the ultra-Protestants and of the more ingenuous free-thinkers creep.

The truth is that Fascism and the revival of Catholicism, or at all events of a generally religious spirit, have coincided, and both are the result of a new appreciation of spiritual values, which came as a reaction to the

materialism of the past fifty years. But the two movements are by no means identical, and, while containing many common features enabling them to act in harmony in various fields, each has certain features differentiating it from the other.

But although ever fresh proposals were being advanced for its solution, the Roman question still remained unsolved. The newest proposals differed essentially from the earlier ones advocated immediately after 1870. There was now no question of restoring the old Papal States, nor even of limiting them to the Roman province. It was, indeed, said many years ago that Italy could render no greater disservice to the Papacy than by handing over to it the government of a great modern city like Rome, and every day less was heard of the restoration of the Temporal Power than of the independence of the Church. As we have seen, the Vatican refused to lend itself to the intrigues of the Central Powers during the war. The development of modern arms and means of communication, notably aerial communication, would render illusory an independence of the Church based on the possession of a small territorial State, and at the same time the practical impossibility for Italy to hand over even a small part of its citizens to the rule of the Vatican is fully recognized, if not openly admitted, by the Vatican. A solution which was suggested in recent years and has found general favour is that the sovereignty over the Vatican palaces be conferred on the Pope, who now only has the *enjoyment* and use of them. The proposal at first was not formulated in a precise manner, nor was it the subject of regular negotiations. But it was ventilated and not definitely rejected—the policy of the Vatican is never to refuse an offer, but to avoid promising any *quid pro quo*.

During the Eucharistic Congress of Bologna in September, 1927, the *Osservatore Romano* reminded the world of the existence of the Roman question and of the difficulties of a solution. Professor Gentile, the eminent Italian philosopher, in an article published in the *Corriere della Sera* (September 30, 1927), expressed the opinion, held by many others, that a solution was not really desirable. The international interest of the Church, he declared, undoubtedly requires a sort of juridical independence. Such

a condition of things cannot be created through the will of the Italian State, because if it were so created the Church would always remain in a sense under the dependence of Italy. The acceptance by Italy of the request that an ecclesiastical State be set up with full and effective autonomy would be tantamount to entrusting the question to an international tribunal or conference. Conciliation on the basis of juridical independence is thus clearly impossible. But a *de facto* conciliation is a different matter, and it is along these lines that the present *régime* has been and still is proceeding. It consists, Professor Gentile asserts, in "recognizing the absolute religious value of the Catholic Church, satisfying all its requests. All of them, save one, the one which the *Osservatore Romano* recalls as ever in suspense, ever actual: that request and those dependent on and coinciding with it inasmuch as they limit and consequently annul the intangible sovereignty of the State, and would make it *propter vitam vivendi perdere causas*. All possible *de facto* conciliation, provided no attempt be made to achieve through such conciliation a *de jure* settlement, which cannot be expected from any effort of goodwill, and which the Church cannot desire unless it says to the State, *mors tua viat mea*." The Church, Professor Gentile concludes, does enjoy all the independence it can desire. The Law of Guarantee, in spite of its imperfections and lack of logic, has answered its purpose, and that limitation of Papal sovereignty, which is apparently merely juridical, has enormously increased the prestige and moral authority of the supreme ecclesiastical power. Consequently, he is convinced, the continuation of the present state of things is desirable in the interest both of the Church and the State.¹

Some of the Fascist newspapers replied to the *Osservatore Romano* with resentment, saying that the Papacy did not appear sufficiently grateful for the benefits extended to it by the Fascist Government. The *Osservatore* retorted that it fully appreciated these benefits, but that they have not created a credit balance in favour of the State. The

¹ Signor Guido De Luca in his little book, *L'Italia e il Papa si concilieranno*, took Professor Gentile to task for his attitude, and attributed to him and his philosophical school the responsibility for recent disagreements with the Vatican.

State has merely given back to the Church a part of what the Italy of yesterday, of which Fascist Italy is the heir, had taken away, and reconstructed a part of what Masonic Italy had destroyed. It added that an "Italian solution" was not possible, because the Pope, as head of Catholic interests throughout the whole world, cannot become a chaplain of the King of Italy. It does not follow that the Catholics of the whole world must decide on the solution. The Pope is the sole judge. Quoting Mussolini's own words, pronounced on April 21, 1921, when he expressed anxiety at the formation of national Catholic churches, because it would mean that many millions of men would cease to look towards Italy and Rome, the paper concluded that the solution must be such as to make the independence of the Pope visible to the whole world.

The *Foglio d'ordini* of the Fascist party of October 20, 1927, published a note on the subject, stating that the tone of the discussion was elevated and serene and worthy of the new atmosphere created by the Fascist régime; that, judging by the statements of the *Osservatore*, the question, according to the Vatican, was not international but bilateral—i.e., to be settled between the Italian State and the Holy See, that the problem of the effective independence of the Holy See was, to judge by the articles of the Vatican organ, not necessarily bound up with conditions of a territorial nature. It is evident that Fascist Italy could never consider the restoration, even in a limited manner, of the Temporal Power which came to an end in 1870, "to the immense advantage, in our opinion, of the moral prestige of the Church of Rome." In conclusion, the solution of the "Roman Question" was stated by the *Foglio d'ordini* to be "arduous, but not impossible."

In March, 1928, the Centro nazionale, a political group of Catholics who had seceded from the Partito popolare and given their full support to the Government, held a meeting on the Capitol, in which, while expressing their devotion to the Pope, they paid a warm tribute to the Government for its measures in defence of religion and morals. Pius XI., in an address to the Giunta diocesana of Rome, severely stigmatized the conduct of the Centro nazionale for not having paid homage to him in the Vatican, and made some strictures on the Government.

He admitted that it had done much good to religion, but, he said, many things still remained *lacrimæ rerum*, and he expressed his regret at the Government policy of a State monopoly of education and deplored the obstacles and threats against the work of the *Azione cattolica*, in many places, "although not in all, nor in the majority." The Government did not reply, but on April 9 it decreed the absorption of the Catholic Boy Scouts into the Balilla organization, which was to concentrate all formations and organizations for the education, professional, physical, moral, and spiritual training of youth. But a further enactment (May 14) expressly declared that the decree of April 9 referred exclusively to youth formations of a semi-military character, and precisely to the Catholic Boy Scouts, whereas associations of a predominantly religious character, such as the *Azione cattolica*, to which the Pope attached particular importance, were not contemplated.

In the meanwhile conversations had been going on in the greatest secrecy with the object of arriving at a definite solution of the conflict between the Vatican and the Italian State. In the summer of 1926, Signor Mussolini, acting through an intermediary, had let the Pope know that he was desirous of a friendly settlement, and the Pope replied that that was his own wish also. Unofficial, semi-official, and finally official negotiations followed between Cardinal Gasparri and Signor Mussolini, the former represented by Monsignor Borgongini Duca and Signor Pacelli, the latter by Signor Barone, councillor of State, and after Signor Barone's death Signor Pacelli was the sole intermediary. The task was no easy one, as neither side could afford to sacrifice essential prerogatives, and the Pope was anxious that the political settlement should be accompanied by a Concordat regulating the position of the clergy and the religious orders in Italy. Early in January, 1929, it began to be rumoured that an agreement was imminent, and on February 7 Cardinal Gasparri informed the diplomatic corps accredited to the Holy See that it had been concluded and would be signed very shortly. Finally, at noon on February 11, 1929, Signor Mussolini and Cardinal Gasparri met at the Lateran Palace and signed the treaty, the concordat, and the financial convention, whereby the "Roman Question" was definitely solved. The Law of

Papal Guarantees was abrogated, and the Pope recognized the Italian Kingdom under the Savoy dynasty, with Rome as the capital. The "visible independence," to which the Holy See attached so much importance, was provided for by the clause recognizing the full ownership and sovereignty of the Papacy over the Vatican area and making of it the "Vatican City." This city, neutralized and inviolable, comprises St. Peter's, the Vatican palaces, and certain adjoining buildings, in all some 44 hectares. Papal jurisdiction also extends to the Lateran, the Palazzo della Cancelleria, the residence of the Cardinal Vicar, and the Papal villa at Castel Gandolfo. Diplomatic relations are established between the Holy See and Italy, but the former declared its determination to keep out of all temporal disputes between States and international congresses connected with them, and consequently will not apply for admission to the League of Nations. The Concordat provides that the Italian bishops shall be appointed by the Holy See without any intervention of the Italian Government, but must swear allegiance to the King. Church marriages are recognized as valid, and religious instruction, already imparted in the elementary schools, is extended to the secondary ones, but these provisions do not of course apply to non-Catholics. The religious congregations are recognized and entitled to own property. By the terms of the financial convention Italy undertook to pay to the Holy See 750,000,000 lire in cash and 5 per cent. bonds to the nominal value of one milliard lire, a total inferior to the capitalization of the annuity assigned to the Papacy by the law of 1871.

Only a Government as strong as that of Signor Mussolini, untrammelled by Parliamentary interference and Masonic intrigue, could have achieved this result. The settlement aroused the most widespread satisfaction throughout Italy. The State is freed from the presence of a potentially hostile organization within its borders, secures greater prestige as the chief Catholic Power and supporter of the Holy See, and enhanced authority through friendly Catholic activities in all parts of the world. The Papacy acquires "visible independence" with a nominal territorial sovereignty, and is freed from the shackles of formulæ which no longer correspond to realities.

XV

THE NEW FOREIGN POLICY

THE war had proved that the Italian people was just as capable of waging a mighty struggle as any of the other great nations, and ended with a victory for Italy which was more complete than any other in the whole war. Not only was Italy's hereditary enemy utterly defeated—"what had been one of the most powerful armies in the world," as General Diaz's victory communiqué stated, "was annihilated"—but the hereditary enemy had been wiped off the face of the map, and Italy could at last feel secure on her northern and north-eastern frontiers.

But at the end of the war the Italians felt the full burden of the immense sacrifices which they had made, sacrifices which were proportionately greater than those of any of the other principal Allies, as Italy was a poorer country and therefore felt the strain more. Public opinion consequently demanded that these sacrifices, the loss of over 600,000 men killed, of several hundred thousand disabled, and a vast amount of wealth destroyed, should be adequately appreciated and receive proper compensation. Italian aspirations were divided into two groups: one concerned the frontiers of Italy and the lands immediately bordering on Italy inhabited by Italians, or at least by people with an Italian civilization and traditions, and the other concerning Italy's necessity for demographic and economic expansion. For sentimental reasons Italy wished to bring all the Italian-speaking peoples of the ex-Austrian Empire within the Italian fold, and for reasons of safety needed a satisfactory frontier; for sixty years she had lived under the incubus of the *iniqui confini*, the frontier wholly unfavourable to them imposed after the war of 1866. But for economic and demographic reasons Italy also claimed that now at last the time had come for redressing the injustice that a rapidly expanding nation of 35,000,000 to 40,000,000 inhabitants should remain for ever restricted within the narrow limits

of Italy, whereas other less prolific races had unlimited spaces in which to expand.

What did Italy find instead at the Peace Conference? Her Allies grudged her a very considerable part of the extremely limited ex-Austrian territories claimed by her, now advancing ethnographic reasons, now the necessity that Adriatic ports be given to other States for whom they would be useful. In the unseemly wrangles over the Adriatic problem Italy found her Allies supporting against her claims those of her and their ex-enemies. In the colonial field Germany's former possessions and the rich provinces wrested from Turkey were divided up among those of the Allied Powers who already held vast colonial territories, while to Italy, who had more need of them than any other country, practically nothing was awarded. Nor was this all. A large portion of Asia Minor, which had actually been promised to Italy by a written agreement—that of St. Jean de Maurienne of April, 1917—was assigned to Greece, who had only intervened at the end of the war, unwillingly coerced into it by France and Great Britain. That Greece proved unable to derive any lasting benefit from this unearned territorial increment and was forced to relinquish it after her armies in Anatolia had been destroyed, and that its possession might have involved Italy in serious difficulties in the future, is beside the point. The fact remains—and Italy could not forget it—that Smyrna had been solemnly promised to Italy by the British and French Governments, and that, doubtless under the pressure of Wilson, the promise had been broken over a legal quibble in order to favour Greece.

These facts help to explain why Italy was, particularly in the early days after the conclusion of peace, not too favourably disposed towards the League of Nations. While the Covenant was, at Wilson's insistence, grafted on to the Peace Treaties, although it was accepted by the Italian delegation and eventually ratified by Parliament, it did not at first inspire much confidence in the nation at large. Oddly enough, those statesmen who are now in opposition to the Fascist *régime* and profess ardent devotion to the League, such as Signor Nitti and Count Sforza, were at that time among those who expressed the deepest scepticism concerning it.

Nor should we forget that Italian aspirations found no more bitter opponents than the many cranks, faddists, and pacifists who had to a large extent inspired the creation of the League and exercised influence over its activities, and those aspirations were regarded by such people as evidence of Italy's wicked imperialism. At the same time the League appeared to the Italian public to have been instituted chiefly for the benefit of those States which had practised imperialism most successfully and secured for themselves, both before and after the war, all the most desirable plums; wherefore the humanitarian and pacifist outpourings of League enthusiasts sounded a little thin to Italian ears, and were regarded in Italy as mere camouflage for a *Realpolitik* of the most uncompromisingly Prussian type. I do not maintain that this view was wholly justified, but it undoubtedly existed and affected Italy's foreign policy.

Lack of confidence in and suspicion of the League were not by any means limited to any one political party, but were common to nearly all. Nationalists and others who sympathized with them, Liberals of various shades, Democrats, Republicans and *rinunciatori* (as those who were ready to renounce some of the territories assigned to Italy were called)—all regarded it, for one reason or another, with dislike, while to the Socialists and Communists the League was merely an invention of capitalism and therefore of the Devil. In the mass of the public there was, moreover, a general lack of interest in the League and its activities, which was due, to a large extent, to the fact that most of the questions affecting Italian affairs were outside the competence of the League. There was, however, one exception. This was the inquiry into raw materials. At the time of the first Assembly of the League, in November, 1920, Great Britain had placed what amounted to an export tax on coal, and some other countries were doing the same with regard to other raw materials necessary for Italy's very existence. The Italian delegation proposed that the question, which was of an essentially international character, should be entrusted to the League, but it found that those member States which possessed the raw materials, to say nothing of the United States, who were not in the League, were radically opposed to any limitation of their freedom

in the matter of export duties by the League if it touched their interests. An inquiry was finally authorized, but no action taken. This episode was not calculated to enhance the prestige of the League in Italy.

There were, moreover, two points in connection with the League on which Italy always insisted, and which must be regarded as absolutely in conformity with the true principles of that institution. One was the necessity that the enemy States should be admitted to it as soon as possible. No other Power supported the candidatures of Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria in the first years of the League more strenuously than Italy, and as soon as that of Germany was presented, Italy was equally vigorous in advocating it. The other point was that Italy has followed a consistent and unswerving policy in opposing the theory of the League as a super-State, with which a number of persons who understand little of international affairs frequently coquetted, not realizing that they were thereby jeopardizing the very existence of the League.

Since the advent of the Fascist Government Italy has taken a much more active interest in the League than before and played a more important part in its work. The Fascists had from the beginning of the movement shared the general attitude of Italian public opinion towards the League, "only more so." But Signor Mussolini's Government did not regard it by any means with contempt, for he realized its possibilities as a useful instrument for diplomatic relations, which had hitherto been almost monopolized by Great Britain and France, and was determined that Italy, too, should now make good use of it. He saw that the greater the general importance and prestige of a State, the greater weight would it carry within as well as without the League. This may not be in strict conformity with the more idealistic League conception, but it undoubtedly corresponds with the realities of international relations. Italy had now acquired an enhanced international prestige, and was therefore in a position to play a useful part in League affairs, as well as in those outside the League.

Italy nevertheless realizes that the League has its limitations as well as its possibilities, that it is not yet strong enough to deal with the greatest political questions, and that it would be very dangerous to try to force the pace, as,

indeed, Sir Austen Chamberlain himself has often wisely declared.

A few words should be said on Italy's attitude towards one aspect of the League's activities—disarmament. Italy, especially Fascist Italy, has often been represented as strongly opposed to any reduction of armaments, even by citizens of countries which are increasing their armaments to an alarming extent. As a matter of fact, successive Italian Governments, including the present one, have repeatedly declared that they are not opposed to a policy of disarmament, but they realize the difficulties and do not try to gloss them over for the sake of harbouring pleasant illusions. Signor Mussolini himself declared in a speech delivered in the Senate in 1926 that if disarmament is to be effective it must be general—*i.e.*, all nations must proceed to a proportionate reduction of their armaments, and they must effect it on land, at sea, and in the air. Otherwise "it is an ugly comedy." The Italian delegates at the innumerable disarmament conferences maintained this attitude. But in the Preparatory Commission they were faced by the thesis of the British delegates that Great Britain, an island Power with large overseas possessions, had naval necessities which could not be considered on the same footing as those of Continental Powers. There are certainly excellent reasons for this view, but League enthusiasts must not be surprised if Italy, too, considers her own particular interests in the matter of disarmament, and is not too ready to rush in where other Powers fear to tread. The pacifism of the various disarmament enthusiasts leaves Italian public opinion quite cold; it finds the actions of Governments and the statements of their official representatives much more significant. At the same time Italy has not only not increased her armaments as compared with those of pre-war days, but has actually reduced them, which is more than can be said of some other Powers. If she has made them more efficient, as she certainly has done, it is for the sake of security and as a matter of defence. The Brenner frontier, of which certain pacifists disapprove, has enabled her to effect such reduction.

Independently of the League some other aspects of Italy's policy should be examined. Relations with France are somewhat complex. I have already set forth the course

of those relations from 1849 to the outbreak of the World War. During that war, although Italy and France were allies, there was never the same feeling of cordial solidarity between them as there was between Italy and Great Britain, and numerous episodes occurred tending to embitter Franco-Italian relations. This was notably the case in Macedonia, especially when General Sarrail was Commander-in-Chief of the Allied armies, as he appeared more anxious to establish absolute French supremacy in the political and commercial field in that area than to defeat the enemy. Nor did the French always seem to appreciate the great efforts made by the Italians, and if the latter were sometimes unduly sensitive and saw offence where none was intended, the French occasionally failed to show excessive generosity of spirit towards an ally whose intervention had saved them from defeat.

After the war the attitude of France towards Italy was largely inspired by anxiety. On the one hand, France was alarmed at the rapid revival of Germany, the reality and rapidity of which, perhaps, she exaggerated, and at the growth of the German population as compared with her own stationary or declining birth-rate. Fearing that sooner or later Germany might undertake a war of *rèvanche*, she proceeded to form a chain of vassal States encircling Germany, to be called upon to assist her in case of need. One of these was Yugoslavia, and that Power, having many causes of disagreement with Italy, was prepared to support French policy against Germany only in exchange for assistance or at least encouragement in its own disputes with Italy. France did not refuse to lend herself to this Yugoslav policy, or so, at least, Italian public opinion firmly believed; she certainly contributed very materially to the re-arming of Yugoslavia's army. Throughout the Adriatic controversy, although France, like Great Britain, ended by advising Yugoslavia to accept Italy's proposals at Rapallo in 1920, on many occasions she appeared to attach far more importance to Yugoslavia's friendship than to that of Italy.

This attitude on the part of France was also partly inspired by alarm at the development of Italy herself, whose population, like that of Germany, grew far more rapidly than her own. On the other hand, perhaps the chief error

of France in her dealings with Italy has been her attitude of professed contempt, as expressed by some of her statesmen and journalists. If she feared Italy in some respects, she failed to adapt herself to the idea that Italy had become a Great Power with as much need for and right to expansion as France, and that the rapid growth of her population was a perfectly natural phenomenon which could not be imputed to her as a fault. She never seems to have cast aside the "superiority complex," which after the Risorgimento made her regard it as Italy's duty to be a sort of vassal of France. This tone of superiority naturally provoked resentment in Italy, which found expression in the sometimes undiplomatic and exaggeratedly violent outpourings of a part of the Italian Press.

There are, moreover, certain particular points of friction which accentuate ill-feeling. The position of Italians in France raises one set of difficulties. There are between 800,000 and 1,000,000 Italians in that country, the number having considerably increased since the war owing to causes described elsewhere. The gaps thus left were not filled by natural increase, owing to what the French term *la grève des berceaux* (the strike of the cradles), and France has absolute need of foreign immigration, which Italy has supplied in larger numbers than other countries; but the French Government and public opinion demanded that this influx should serve French interests exclusively and that every measure should be taken to denationalize the immigrants as rapidly as possible and secure their absorption, in order that so many more recruits should be provided for the French army. This policy is advocated openly and to a large extent carried out, although not on so wide a scale as some writers, such as Marcel Paon or Charles Lambert would wish, and not the slightest consideration was shown for the interests or desires of the countries whence these immigrants came. Italy's very natural desire to maintain at all events spiritual ties with her migrant sons was regarded in France as almost criminal, and it was claimed that Italy should be content simply to supply her with such workers as she may need and then forget their very existence.¹ This incomprehension of the very existence

¹ One statesman even proposed that facilities and encouragement should be extended to immigrants to Gallicize their surnames.

of interests and aspirations other than French ones is responsible for a good deal of the ill-feeling.

In recent times the attitude of a part of the French Press, and even of certain circles in touch with the Government, towards Fascism has provided further causes of friction. Although plenty of criticism of Fascism and of Italy in general is made in Great Britain and other countries, these attacks are believed in Italy to be in most, if not in all, cases the result of sincere if mistaken convictions. But in France, where the Press is under closer Government control than elsewhere, they are regarded as inspired by the powers that be.

The presence in France of the so-called *Fuorusciti* gave rise to more serious consequences. As I said before, the *Fuorusciti* are not technically exiles, but men who have left their country because their seditious revolutionary activities rendered them liable to criminal proceedings. Their numbers are not large—a few hundreds at most—and they represent but a trifling percentage of the Italians residing in France, the great majority of whom are patriotic citizens and men who take no active part in politics, but attend to their own business. There are, of course, some *Fuorusciti* also in other countries. But while those in Great Britain confine themselves to writing in the Radical or Labour Press and basking in the smiles of benevolently sentimental old ladies and professors and Red or pink politicians, in France they systematically weave plots to bring about a revolution in Italy. Although most of these plottings were more ridiculous than dangerous, in a few cases seditious attempts of a more serious nature have been engineered in France, such as that of Lucetti against the life of Signor Mussolini in September, 1926. The *Fuorusciti* also conduct a venomous propaganda among the Italian community in France by means of a reptile Press filled with the most savage incitements to revolution and murder, and leave no stone unturned to embitter Franco-Italian relations still further, in the hope, perhaps, of provoking the intervention of foreign arms to restore them and their friends to power.

Italian public opinion and the Press openly accused the French Democratic parties and the Freemasons of lending moral support—and sometimes support that was not only

moral—to these Fuorusciti and their Press for political purposes, and many Italians firmly believed that the French Government itself was behind this support and that it encouraged the Fuorusciti for reasons of its own, not always friendly to Italy. There was, no doubt, a good deal of exaggeration in all this, and some Italian papers were not always as level-headed as would have been desirable. But the seditious Italian newspapers of France had a very small circulation and no visible means of subsistence, so that it was not unnatural to ask whence the money to support them emanated. Not a few of the Fuorusciti themselves seemed to be amply supplied with funds. The resentment thus aroused in Italy was by no means limited to Fascist circles, but extended to every shade of public opinion (except, of course, to the unblushing Reds), because to-day no Italian suffers what appears to be foreign interference in Italy's internal affairs gladly.

Another point of friction is Tunisia. The occupation of Tunis by France in the face of her repeated promises that she held no such intention has always rankled. Two-thirds of the white population of the Regency are Italian against one-third French, and the development of the country would have been absolutely impossible without Italian labour. The French authorities have been making every effort to force the Italians of Tunis to assume French citizenship; the agreement whereby their status is regulated has to be renewed every three months, and at every renewal difficulties are raised. Attempts are constantly made to get rid of the Italian schools and institutions, but the Italian community, availing itself of treaty rights, resists this policy with unswerving devotion to the spirit of *italianità*. Tunisia does not offer great possibilities for further Italian immigration, and Italy has certainly no intention of challenging France's political supremacy in the Regency. But the conclusion of a regular convention stabilizing the existing agreement would do much towards better feeling.

Apart from these particular cases, there is in Italy a general impression that France systematically places obstacles in the way of Italian expansion in every field, both political and economic, and that whatever line of policy Italy decides to adopt in any part of the world she

finds herself "up against" France. This conviction is, in part, no doubt due to a certain hyper-sensitiveness in a section of the Italian Press and public opinion and to an imperfect knowledge of international problems. But France's apparent failure to comprehend Italy's undoubted necessities, and the somewhat unsympathetic attitude of a part of her Press towards Italy and the Italians, strengthen such beliefs. This is in every way regrettable, as there are no really serious divergences of interest between the two countries which could not be adjusted with a little goodwill on both sides. On the other hand, there are undoubtedly certain forces interested in promoting Franco-Italian misunderstandings, both in Bolshevik Russia, which stands to gain by any quarrel between civilized Powers, and in old, aggressive Prussian Junker circles, which, although weakened by the war, are not yet quite dead.

Towards the end of 1927 and at the beginning of 1928 there appeared to be signs of a real understanding between France and Italy. The Franco-Italian agreement of December 3rd, 1927, whereby each country guaranteed to the citizens of the other on its own territory the benefits of the most-favoured nation clause in the matter of residence, establishment, the practice of business and the professions, and the possession, purchase, or renting of real estate, was a small matter, but by no means without significance. Another much more important indication of the change in the French attitude was the suppression of the *Corriere degli Italiani*, the foulest of all the seditious Italian papers in France, which showed not only that the French Government realized that to allow its uninterrupted publication of incitements to revolution and murder was hardly a friendly act, but also that it was beginning to appreciate that the Italian Fuorusciti were also the friends of the French and Russian Communists, who are as determined to strike at the heart of France as the former are to strangle Italy. Another episode which helped to open the eyes of France with regard to Italy was the interpretation which Yugoslavia gave to the Franco-Yugoslav Treaty concluded last autumn. While the treaty itself contained nothing to which exception could be taken by Italy, in Yugoslavia it was regarded as conferring upon that country *carte blanche* to

take any action which it might see fit against Italy. If France had deemed it advisable to come to a friendly understanding with the Triune Kingdom, as was both right and proper, she had no intention of letting herself in for unconditional support of a dangerous Yugoslav policy of adventure. The Quai d'Orsay appears to have given the Yugoslav Government a broad hint as to the limits beyond which France was not prepared to go.

Nor should we forget that there is in France a current of opinion strongly in favour of a good understanding with Italy. Men like F. Coty and Marcel Boulenger, papers like the *Figaro*, the *Avenir*, and *l'Europe nouvelle*, sometimes even the *Journal des Débats*, understand the importance of friendship between countries which are equally hostile to Bolshevism, while in Italy a number of writers, including so ardent a Fascist of strongly marked Nationalist tendencies as Francesco Coppola, frequently insist on the importance of placing Franco-Italian relations on a sound basis.

Italy's most important neighbour after France is Yugoslavia. With that country relations are difficult, owing to the profound divergences between their respective levels of culture and civilization and to the memory of Austrian traditions in Croatia and Slovenia. The disagreement has origins in pre-war conditions and events. Before the World War Italy's policy towards Serbia had been uniformly friendly. When Austria was constantly browbeating her small Southern neighbour, Italian sympathies were always on the side of the latter. When Austria undertook to construct the Uvatz-Mitrovitza line, intended to open the route to Salonica and maintain it in Austrian hands, Serbia resorted by initiating a scheme for a Danube-Adriatic railway, and it was in Italy that she found most support for it; if the line was not built it was on account of the outbreak of the Balkan War in 1912, followed by the World War. When, after the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Austria applied to Italy and Great Britain to persuade Serbia to accept the accomplished fact, Italy refused to undertake the ungrateful task, while she succeeded in securing the suppression of Article 25 and the modification of Article 29 of the Berlin Treaty, which were more unfavourable to Serbia and Montenegro than to Italy. In 1913,

when Austria first planned an aggression against Serbia and communicated it to Italy, Italy, as Signor Giolitti declared in Parliament, refused to agree to it. If Italy, together with the other Great Powers, opposed Serbia's claim to annex Northern Albania, it was because the demand was incompatible with the common policy decided on of conferring national independence on Albania.

Italy had had many causes of friction with the peoples which to-day are subjects of the Triune Kingdom, but were formerly under Austro-Hungarian rule. These had been used by Austria, as we have seen, as the instruments of her anti-Italian policy. Although that policy was inspired and directed from Vienna, the Slavs naturally took advantage of it and made themselves particularly unpopular, as the privileged race, with the *Irredenti* Italians.

It was, therefore, only against the Croats and Slovenes that there was any feeling of animosity. Indeed, the hostility between Serbs and Croats tended to make the former the friends of the Italians; in Southern Dalmatia, where there were Serbs as well as Croats and Italians, Serbo-Italian electoral coalitions were occasionally formed. Even when in 1905 a Serbo-Croat coalition was effected to oppose the policy both of Austria and of Hungary, Italo-Serb relations were not immediately affected.

Then came the World War, in which Serbia was involved first of all. When the preparations for Italian intervention were being made, the British, French and Russian Governments invited Serbia to deliver an attack on the Austrian forces beyond the Save—at that moment there were only a few tired Austrian divisions in that sector—to coincide with the coming Italian attack. Serbia agreed and presented a plan of operations to the Allies which was approved. But as the time approached nothing was done to carry it out, in spite of the reiterated requests of the Allied G.H.Q.'s. Finally, the Serbian Government replied that it could do nothing, and, in fact, when Italy went to war the Serbian army made no move. It was afterwards ascertained that the Belgrade Government had, indeed, been willing to act, but that it was completely dominated by the secret societies who controlled the army, and that, as their leaders aspired to the acquisition of certain terri-

stories also claimed by Italy, and, indeed, parts of the Italian Friuli and of the Veneto,¹ they were averse to any action which might help Italy. A significant episode is recorded in an Italian review. An Italian happened to be at Nish, where the capital of Serbia had been transferred during the Austrian bombardment of Belgrade, when Italy's intervention was announced. "There was," he told the writer of the article, "an instant of intense emotion, and a beginning of an outburst of joy, but immediately after, as if by a word of command, there came silence and a sense of disheartenment. In the evening, before the seat of the Italian Legation (which, like the other Legations, had followed the Serb Government to Nish), there was a hostile demonstration."

Yet it was the Italian fleet, as King Peter himself admitted, which played the most important part in saving the remains of the gallant Serbian army from annihilation after the catastrophe of 1915; this was further confirmed by Mr. (now the Earl of) Balfour in the House of Commons on February 23rd, 1918. On the Macedonian front Italian and Serb troops fraternized amicably, and when the great offensive of September, 1918, was being planned, the Crown Prince (now King) Alexander of Serbia requested that his troops should be placed side by side with the Italian expeditionary force in the coming attack, and he expressed to General Mombelli his deep regret that General Franchet d'Esperey (Commander-in-Chief of the Allied armies) had not seen his way to accede to this request. The many services rendered by Italy to the Serbs, especially in the dark days of 1915-1917, were too quickly forgotten in the post-war wrangles over the Adriatic problem, and were never alluded to in the Press or on any public platform by the Serbs, although individuals of that nationality were ready to do so in private conversation.

During the war, while the Serbs were fighting on the same side as the Italians, the other peoples of what to-day is Yugoslavia were fighting on the opposite side, and no part of the Imperial and Royal army fought so strenuously or with such bitter hatred against the Allies, especially

¹ Some of the Yugoslav propaganda maps included "Mleci," *i.e.* Venice, in the future Yugoslav Empire.

against Italy, as the Croat and Slovene regiments. Field-Marshal Boroevich was himself an Orthodox Serb. Of the Yugoslav prisoners in Russia who were offered the chance of enlisting in the Serb army in Macedonia, only the Bosnians and Herzegovinians responded in large numbers; the others, Croats and Slovenes, were too devoted to the cause of the Habsburgs to accept. It was also noted that these Yugoslavs not only fought strenuously against the Italians and the Russians, but also against their blood-brothers of Serbia, who complained of the "methods of barbarism" employed against them by those other Yugoslavs.

Yet at the Peace Conference the Yugoslavs presented themselves *en bloc* as Allies, and were allowed to contest the aspirations of Italy, not without success, on a footing of equality; one of their delegates was that very Monsignor Koroshetz, who during the war had been unswerving in his professions of devotion to the Habsburg Monarchy. The protracted dispute over the Eastern frontiers of Italy could not fail to embitter feelings between the two countries still more, but a sort of settlement was at last arrived at by the Rapallo Treaty of November, 1920, and the subsequent Santa Margherita conventions. It was not a complete nor satisfactory settlement, and some of its clauses, especially those concerning Fiume, proved unworkable. When Signor Mussolini came into power it was feared in foreign countries that he would adopt a truculent attitude towards Yugoslavia, as he was known to be strongly Nationalist in his views on international affairs. But he showed his statesmanlike qualities by at once opening negotiations with Yugoslavia for a final and workable agreement. By the Treaty of Rome, signed in January, 1924, Italo-Yugoslav relations were placed on a sound basis of friendship. But the group of agreements known as the Nettuno Conventions, which were to complete and carry out the clauses of the treaty, were never ratified by Yugoslavia, and this refusal was publicly announced by that Government in July, 1925, the announcement being immediately followed by a renewal of the violent anti-Italian campaign in the Press. It was not until 1928 that Yugoslavia finally ratified the Nettuno agreements, since when relations between the two countries have improved considerably.

Further difficulties arose over Yugoslavia's policy towards Albania. Albania has ever been an *idée fixe* for the Yugoslav peoples, or more particularly for the Serbs. During the Balkan Wars Serbia was determined to secure Durazzo, and was only prevented from doing so by the Powers, who wished Albania to be an independent State. During the World War the Albanian mirage was largely responsible for the Serb débâcle of 1915, because the Serbian army, instead of withdrawing southwards into Macedonia, where the Allied armies could have helped it, turned westward into Albania, with disastrous results. After the war Yugoslavia attempted more than once to encroach on Albania. She had succeeded at the Peace Conference in getting many districts wholly inhabited by Albanians assigned to her; there are almost as many Albanians in Yugoslavia as in Albania proper. Immediately after the withdrawal of the Italian troops in the summer of 1920, Yugoslavia threatened the frontiers of that State, and again in 1921, when she actually invaded some Albanian districts, which she was forced to evacuate owing to the vigorous action of the League of Nations promoted by the Great Powers.

Italy's relations with Albania have always been very close. There is a sentimental friendship dating from the time of Skanderbeg, when a large number of Albanians settled in Southern Italy and Sicily, and their descendants still speak an Albanian dialect. Before the war Italy had frequent disputes with Austria over Albania, and was determined to prevent any Power from occupying that coast, which is only a few hours' steam from Italy. Then, as now, Italy's interest in Albania was a purely negative one, and if she occupied part of Albania during the war it was for temporary strategic reasons. After the Armistice an unwise policy was followed towards Albania, which aroused the resentment of the Albanians and resulted in the rising in the spring of 1920. The withdrawal of the occupying forces, although a sound policy in itself, was carried out at the worst possible moment, after a series of attacks by the tribesmen on the Italian garrison. But since then Italy's course has been always to insist on the integrity of Albanian territory, while she has afforded the country invaluable financial assistance and is helping it to develop its re-

sources. Italy has no intention of occupying Albania, which would involve heavy expense and be of no use to her.

Again in 1925 Yugoslavia's policy was inspired by a desire to interfere in Albania's internal affairs, when she assisted Ahmed Bey Zogu, then a refugee in Belgrade, to raise a rebellion and make himself master of the country. Apparently, however, she had made a bad bargain, of which she afterwards repented, and tried to promote other agitations in the hope of placing another Government in power more amenable to her influence. It was for this reason that Italy, on whom the Conference of Ambassadors in 1921 had conferred a sort of mandate for safeguarding Albanian independence, concluded a treaty of friendship with Albania on November 27th, 1926. This agreement aroused bitter resentment in Yugoslavia, professedly because it appeared to confer special rights on Italy in Albania, although, as a matter of fact, it was merely a confirmation, as far as Italy was concerned, of the general obligations of States members of the League of Nations to guarantee each other's integrity against aggression, so that only a Power having aggressive intentions against Albania would have any real reason for objecting to it. Yugoslavia immediately opened negotiations for the ratification of the treaty of friendship with France, and in the meanwhile the Italian Government communicated to the other Great Powers information in its possession as to the preparations being made on Yugoslavia's frontiers with Albania for an attack on that country. Yugoslavia denied the truth of the allegations, and whatever preparations she had made were soon *escamoté*. The treaty with France was ratified, and although none of its provisions, as I said before, can be regarded as objectionable in themselves, the moment chosen for the ratification appeared to Italian public opinion as singularly inopportune. The Italo-Albanian Treaty of Friendship was now completed by a Treaty of Alliance concluded on November 22nd, 1927. This new agreement aroused further excitement in Belgrade. In her controversies with Italy Yugoslavia frequently insisted on the desirability of a policy of "the Balkans for the Balkan peoples," and rejected any interference in the Balkans of non-Balkan Powers. The policy is unexceptionable, but

while Italy certainly does not want to encroach on the independence of the Balkans, either in Albania, where her interests, as I have said before, are purely negative, or elsewhere, the graver danger to be avoided seems to be that of an aggression by one Balkan Power against another.

I do not, of course, claim that the attitude and tone of the Italian Press, especially that of some of the more irresponsible organs, has been free from blame; far from it. But no Italian paper has ever reached the pitch of violence in which even the most important Yugoslav organs sometimes indulge. It is, indeed, fortunate that very few Italians read the *Obzor* or the *Agramer Tagblatt* of Zagreb, or the *Novo Dobra* of Split (Spalato); the latter organ, edited by a priest, actually celebrated the tenth anniversary of Caporetto on November 24th, 1927, as a Yugoslav glory.

With the other Balkan States Italy has established very close and friendly intercourse. With Greece, after the irritation arising from the massacre of the Tellini mission and the subsequent occupation of Corfu, and the rivalry between the two countries over influence in Anatolia, had come to an end, relations have been more cordial than ever before. In fact, the disagreements which had embittered Italo-Greek relations for some time appear to have been chiefly due to outside interferences of an interested nature. With Rumania relations have almost always been very cordial, but Italy's friendship with Bulgaria and Hungary have at times caused some uneasiness, and so have the disputes between Italy and Yugoslavia. But the balance is decidedly on the credit side, especially since Italy's ratification of the treaty assigning Bessarabia to Rumania rendered that agreement operative. Cultural relations with Rumania are, of course, closer than with other Balkan States because of the affinity existing between the two languages and the pride which Rumanians feel in their Latin origins.

Italy has found in the Balkans a very fruitful field of economic penetration, and is consequently deeply interested in their increasing prosperity, which means an ever-wider market for Italian trade. Even with Yugoslavia commercial relations are very close, Italy being that country's best

customer. It is difficult to see that any danger to peace can ensue from a policy based on the development of these relations.

For over thirty years Italy, Austria, and Germany had been allies. With Austria, as I have pointed out, relations were never cordial. With Germany they were correct, but not intimate. On the outbreak of the war the interventionists were always inspired by hatred of Austria rather than of Germany, although the German invasion of Belgium had aroused great indignation. When Italy had actually intervened the fighting, as far as her own forces were concerned, was chiefly against Austria, although the Italian army met that of Germany at Caporetto and on the French Front. After the Armistice Italy was always inclined to be more lenient towards Germany than the other Allies, and realized sooner than any of them the necessity that Germany should once more be brought into the community of nations as soon as possible. She was inspired in this policy not by any sentimental sympathy for Germany, but by the realization that Europe could not be brought back to normal political or economic conditions as long as so important a political and economic unit as Germany remained outside.

The question of the Alto Adige has on more than one occasion somewhat embittered Italo-German relations, because Italy resented Germany's interference in what Italians regard as a purely internal affair; all the more so as the Alto Adige had never belonged to Germany, but to Austria. Germany has of late years assumed an attitude of protection of all the German-speaking peoples, wherever they may be, whether within or outside Germany's old political frontiers. Signor Mussolini's plain-speaking in his reply to the Bavarian Prime Minister, Herr Held, and to the German Foreign Minister, Herr Stresemann (although it horrified those Englishmen affected by the "spiritual home" complex), had the desired result, and since that passage of arms Italo-German relations have been more cordial than before. It must be remembered that only a small section of the German public is really interested in the Alto Adige, especially in view of the existence of much larger masses of Germans annexed to other States, where there is often no security for life or

property, whereas in the Alto Adige the material well-being of the inhabitants is better cared for than it ever was before, and only a very small percentage of the inhabitants are dissatisfied with Italian rule.¹

With Great Britain Italy's relations have ever been traditionally cordial. During the war, wherever the British and Italian armies had occasion to collaborate, there was never the slightest friction, which is more than can be said of any other two Allied armies! The writer has had personal experience of these relations in Macedonia, and although inter-Allied squabbles were perpetually arising on that front, there were never any between the British and Italian commands and troops.

After the Armistice disagreements occasionally arose, especially in connection with the Adriatic problem and the Turkish tangle. But the Italian Government and also, but perhaps to a lesser extent, the Italian public realized that the apparent unfriendliness of the British Government was not due to a systematic British attitude, but to the idiosyncrasies of one or two individual statesmen and to the sinister influences on those statesmen of President Wilson, which did not involve the British nation. By the spring of 1927 all the outstanding questions between Italy and Great Britain deriving from the war and the Peace Conference had been amicably settled, so that British-Italian relations could be regarded thenceforth as matters of ordinary routine. British-Italian friendship is, indeed, one of the corner-stones of world peace, and it is, indeed, strange that the only persons who are constantly attempting to destroy it are those very individuals who profess themselves the most ardent pacifists. Fortunately they carry small weight among the governing classes of Great Britain, and all well-informed Italians realize that they should not be taken too seriously.

With Turkey Italy's relations have passed through many vicissitudes. The Libyan War naturally created ill-feeling between the two countries, but it did not leave bitter memories behind it. In the World War, although Italy and Turkey were on opposite sides, they had hardly any

¹ See the articles published by the special correspondent of the *Morning Post*, May, 1928.

contact. Although during the war there had been a scheme for an eventual partition of Asia Minor, in which Italy was to have a share, this agreement, as we have seen, was quashed in favour of Greece. But with the birth of the Turkish Nationalist movement after the war Italy was the first of the Allied Powers to realize the folly of attempting to crush Turkey altogether, and, above all, of trying to dominate the Turks by means of the Greeks. In the conflict between the Turkish Nationalists and the Greeks Italy's sympathies were with the former, and she at least was in no way responsible for the disastrous policy of encouraging the Greek Imperialists; indeed, Signor Schanzer, her Minister for Foreign Affairs, did his best to persuade his foreign colleagues to abandon it, but even when the Greeks themselves were ready to come to a friendly agreement with the Turks for a peaceful evacuation of Anatolia his attempt met with no response. The result, as we all know, was the ghastly tragedy of September, 1922.

When negotiations with Turkey recommenced after the fall of Smyrna, and the Turks regarded themselves as victorious, not only over the Greeks, but over the Entente Powers which had supported them, Italy cordially co-operated with Great Britain with the object of arriving at a peaceful settlement, and nowhere was that co-operation closer or more cordial than that between Generals Harington and Mombelli at Constantinople and Mudania. After the conclusion of the Lausanne Treaty, Italy, like other Western Powers, found it difficult to conduct business with the Turks, owing to the extreme suspiciousness and hypersensitiveness with which they regarded all foreigners. But on the whole the Italians were able to do better than the nationals of most other countries, and Italo-Turkish relations would soon have been placed on a friendly basis, had it not been for the rumours, sedulously fostered by those who had no interest in the friendliness of those relations, that Italy was planning an aggression against Anatolia. At one moment the Turks were genuinely alarmed at that prospect, and a part of the foreign Press was filled with stories of large concentrations of Italian troops at Rhodes and of the creation of a vast naval base on the island of Leros. There was, of course, not the slightest foundation for these reports; the garrison at Rhodes has never ex-

ceeded one battalion of infantry, and at Leros there is only a small seaplane base.¹ In June, 1928, Italy, after protracted negotiations, concluded a treaty of friendship and arbitration with Turkey, which placed their political and economic relations on a sound and satisfactory basis, and should serve to put an end to all such rumours. Turkish suspicions of the European Powers in general are not unnatural in view of the history of the past, but if Turkey really wishes to develop into a modern State she will need the assistance of the West, and Italy is now in a position to supply such assistance without being suspected of ulterior motives, and to play an important and useful part in that development.

After the establishment of the Soviet Republic in Russia that country was regarded from widely different angles in Italy. To the Reds of all shades she was the earthly Paradise for humanity, the Mecca of the new faith. To the patriotic parties and to all sensible and well-informed persons she appeared to be a veritable hell upon earth. The Government did not recognize Soviet Russia officially, but semi-official relations were established and a certain amount of trade between the countries was carried on. The Moscow Government and the Third International at first conducted an active propaganda in Italy and financed the various revolutionary outbreaks and organizations, until the activities and vigilance of the Fascists made such action dangerous. After the advent to power of Signor Mussolini Italy felt strong enough to recognize the Soviet Government officially, and concluded a commercial treaty with it. An Italian Embassy was sent to Moscow and a Russian one to Rome, but the Soviets knew that Signor Mussolini would not stand any nonsense in the way of seditious propaganda, and therefore carefully abstained from attempting it. Commercial relations were governed by the treaty

¹ Military and naval preparations in the Dodecanese are a hardy annual in certain foreign newspapers. Besides the agreeable fiction appearing from time to time in the *Referee*, the *Daily Express*, the *New Statesman*, etc., a book appeared in the summer of 1928 by C. D. and I. B. Booth, entitled *Italy's Aegean Possessions*, of an obviously tendentious character, which repeated the usual mis-statements and wild fantasies in fuller detail. The whole account which it gives of the conditions of the islands is an impudent and even ridiculous fabrication.

of February 7th, 1924, but the trade between the two countries has not assumed more than very modest proportions. Political relations between Italy and Russia are of quite small importance, and call for no particular comment. The Soviet system is the very antithesis of the Fascist one, and the two have no occasion to come into contact with each other. When Italy ratified the treaty recognizing Rumania's right to Bessarabia, the Moscow Government lodged a mildly worded protest with the Palazzo Chigi, but the matter was tacitly dropped, and has not been raised again.

With other Powers Italy's relations are less intimate, but with all of them they are friendly. Italy has, indeed, concluded, perhaps, more treaties of friendship and arbitration than any other country, as Sir Eric Drummond, the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, himself declared some time ago, and thus carried out one of the most important recommendations of the Assembly of the League. By this policy she has, indeed, done more for world peace than all the pacifist societies, on both sides of the Atlantic, put together.

XVI

THE PROBLEM OF POPULATION AND EMIGRATION

IF foreign policy is essentially a matter of Government concern, the Italian people were conducting certain aspects of it themselves, independently of the Government. The population was growing rapidly and began to feel a desperate need for expansion. From 25,000,000 in 1861 it had been rising steadily until on the eve of the war it had reached 35,000,000, and although the economic life of the country was expanding, it had not kept up with the growth of population or the increasing needs which civilization brought with it. The reasons given elsewhere held back the progress of agriculture and industry, while the abundance of raw materials and the scarcity of population in certain other lands created a demand for foreign labour which Italy was able to supply.

Emigration began to develop in Italy from the middle of the nineteenth century. The first emigrants came from Northern Italy, particularly from Piedmont and Liguria, and were chiefly attracted by overseas countries such as the United States and Latin America, then beginning to develop economically. During the latter half of the century the emigration to overseas lands spread to Central and Southern Italy, and ended by becoming a predominantly South Italian phenomenon. From Northern Italy, however, a new current was started towards Germany, France, Switzerland, and other European countries; there had been for centuries a certain movement of Italians towards the Levant, dating from the days of the maritime republics of Amalfi, Pisa, Venice, and Genoa, and although it did not increase rapidly, fairly large Italian colonies were established in Constantinople, Smyrna, Salonica, Egypt, and Tunisia.

Thus there came to be two distinct categories of emi-

grants—those who went to overseas countries, and those who preferred Central and Western Europe and the Mediterranean basin. The overseas emigrants were predominantly from the South, and the majority ended, perhaps after crossing the ocean a dozen times, by settling permanently abroad, whereas the emigrants to other European countries were predominantly North Italians, the great majority of whom were seasonal emigrants, who ended their days at home after ten, twenty, or thirty seasons in foreign lands. But the exceptions in all cases were numerous. There were many North Italians who continued to cross the Atlantic and many Southerners who crossed the Alps; a considerable percentage of overseas emigrants definitely returned to Italy, and a smaller percentage of those who went to Western and Central Europe did not return.

In the South the movement was the most striking and, relatively to the numbers of the population, the largest. This was due to the more backward social conditions and poverty of the population, as described in another chapter. The Southern peasant was becoming less tolerant of the landlord's yoke, and he had found a means of liberation which was neither revolution nor brigandage, as in the past. It was, as Professor Volpe says, "a sort of new independence movement, except that now it was a movement of the proletariat against an enemy which was in part the Government, in part the other classes, in part the misery common to all."¹

Emigration was, in other words, an attempt, ill-regulated and without system, by the South Italians to solve their own social and economic problem themselves. In the North the movement was the result of a more careful calculation. The North Italian could earn fairly good wages at home, but he found that by emigrating he could earn more, and therefore he went abroad. In both cases his object was to improve his condition, save up enough capital to buy himself a house and a piece of land, to open a shop or set up a small business, either at home or abroad.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century emigration had assumed larger proportions, and reached its zenith in the first years of the twentieth. From a total of 108,771 in 1876, already a respectable figure, it was over 500,000 in

¹ *L'Italia in cammino*, p. 68.

1901, and in 1913 it reached the huge figure of 872,598, the average of the last five years before the war being 670,000. In the earlier period, the proportion of overseas emigrants was inferior to that of emigrants to Central and Western Europe, but from 1886 onwards the overseas percentage has been well above 50, in some years over 60.

A movement so vast could not fail to produce an impression on public opinion. At first its importance was hardly realized; the Government did not attempt to regulate it in any way, the steamship companies and the emigration agencies were left free to exploit the emigrants as best they pleased, and immigration countries imposed no restrictions. Students of social problems began to examine it, but more with curiosity than interest; landlords and other employers of labour were occasionally preoccupied lest it should result in a too great increase of wages or otherwise hamper production. The authorities were, on the whole, glad that so many people did emigrate, as it reduced unemployment, and emigration passports were occasionally issued to undesirables, to induce them "to leave their country for their country's good." But as the exodus increased, it could not be ignored, and in 1901 the Italian emigration law was enacted. Its object was, in the first place, to protect the emigrant both against persons who wished to exploit him for their own profit and against the effects of his own ignorance. Limitations were imposed on the activities of the agents of the steamship companies, strict police surveillance was established at the Italian ports of departure, rules providing for measures of safety and for the reasonable comfort and hygiene of the emigrants on board were laid down and strictly enforced by means of emigration commissioners, usually members of the army or navy medical corps or other officials, and all the various Government activities concerning emigration services were concentrated in a single Commissariat of Emigration, a department which in time came to acquire even a considerable political importance.

The consequences of emigration on Italian economic, social, and political conditions were very considerable. In the first place, Italian communities came to be spread all over the world. Wherever there were railways, roads, bridges, or large public buildings to be built, canals to be

dug, ports to be extended, great public works of any kind to be carried out, large town building schemes to be realized, vast areas of land to be drained and reclaimed, minerals to be extracted, Italians were there. In certain of these occupations they became experts of the highest skill, and traces of their handiwork are to be found all over the world—in the great cities and industrial and mining centres of the United States, the Argentine pampas, the coffee plantations of Brazil, in the Swiss mountain railways, in the mines of the Meurthe-et-Moselle, of Luxemburg, of Lorraine, of the Ruhr, in every city of France, Switzerland, and Germany, to a lesser extent in the Balkans, along the endless tracks of the Trans-Siberian railways, they have left their mark. It is no exaggeration to say that but for the humble Italian emigrant these great works could never have been accomplished.

In many foreign countries there are more or less prominent Italian communities, large or small fragments of Italy, which have not been without influence on the ethnographical composition of the local population and on its manners and customs, although as a rule the Italians tend to remain concentrated within themselves, at all events, in the first generation or two. In the second or third generation they are usually absorbed as far as citizenship and language go, but even then they continue to remain to some extent a community apart. In France there are not less than 800,000 Italians, and 180,000 in Switzerland; in Germany the permanent colonies are very small, although before the war the number of temporary labourers was considerable (from 1895 to 1914, 1,127,237 migrated to that country). The largest Italian community abroad is in the United States. During the period from 1909 to 1913 the average number of Italians emigrating to the United States was 221,000 per annum, and to-day the Italians in that country are estimated at not less than 3,000,000, the majority of whom are concentrated in the North-Eastern States, particularly in New York, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts; in the city of New York alone they muster over half a million. Large or small groups are to be found in every large town and in an immense number of small ones. There are agricultural communities in various places, but the great majority are in the urban, industrial, or

mining areas, and this is indeed one of the charges levelled against them by those who are, or profess to be, 100 per cent. Americans, even when their names are (or were) D'Brien or Guggenheim. The reason is that the Italians began to emigrate to the United States when the agricultural development of the country was more or less complete, and when there was little demand for labour in the rural areas, but an immense demand for it in the industrial ones, the development of which was in full progress. Wages were higher in the towns, the amenities of life greater, and, further, the Italians of the South, although mostly peasants, when they are at home usually dwell in towns or large villages, and do not care when in America to cut themselves off from their own kith and kin. The earlier emigrants who went to California did form successful farm colonies, but the more recent attempts to settle them on the land, especially in the Southern States, were not successful.

As I said before, the majority of Italian emigrants to the United States ended by settling permanently there. But a considerable percentage fluctuated back and forth, and whenever there was a crisis in that country, large numbers returned home, and thus were not a burden on charity. When there was a boom in trade, they went back. The value for the United States of this "manœuvre-mass" of labour was incalculable. Unfortunately, the Italian communities in the United States are not properly balanced. They are composed in their enormous majority of one class only—that of the unskilled or partially skilled labourer from the rural districts of Central and Southern Italy, and of such members of that class as have risen by ability and hard work in the most favourable hypothesis, by trickery and dishonesty in the least favourable, to a higher social and economic position. The professional and educated classes are a tiny minority, far smaller than is the case in any Italian community of the same size in the "old country." Consequently they are separated from the upper classes of the local population by bars of race and language, as well as by economic and social differences. They are a proletarian race exploited by an aristocratic and plutocratic race. Moreover, the few representatives of the more educated classes among the Italians are, with some excep-

tions, men of inferior standing, and tend to associate with the less desirable class of the native American or Irish politicians in order to exploit other Italians.

In the Argentine there is also a large and, on the whole, more satisfactory Italian community. A high percentage of the total population is Italian or of Italian origin, and a large number of the Italian settlers own or rent land—large estates or small allotments; a still larger number are employed as farm labourers, and in the towns the professional class is numerous, highly esteemed, and prosperous. The Italian element exercises considerable influence, and Italians or persons of Italian descent are found in every walk of life, including politics.

The number of Italian emigrants to the Argentine in the years 1880-1884 totalled 106,953; in 1905-1909 it had risen to 437,523; it fell to 335,913 in 1910-1914, and to 32,058 during the war; but it rose again, although in a smaller measure than before, after the war—63,582 emigrated in 1922, 105,238 in 1923, 67,402 in 1924, 52,986 in 1925, 64,245 in 1926, 70,188 in 1927. A small percentage of persons who would have emigrated to the United States but for the restrictive measures are, no doubt, to be found among those who emigrated to the Argentine in these last years, but they did not swell the total to any large extent, because the Argentine was not in a position to absorb an unlimited amount of foreign labour, and in certain months of the year there is an excess of some 10,000 agricultural workers; in the past these would have flocked home, but now, owing to increased fares, only a small number do so. In all there are some 2,000,000 Italians in the Argentine. The numbers who returned to Italy in 1922-1925 are respectively 13,553, 11,612, 16,244, 21,143.

Italian emigration to Brazil was at one time considerable. In 1880-1884 it totalled 35,625; in 1885-1889, 109,773; in 1895-1899, 320,072. But conditions in that vast and naturally wealthy country were not satisfactory. The great bulk of the Italians were attracted to the coffee plantations of the South, and a considerable number settled in the cities of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Santos, etc. A large percentage had emigrated on prepaid tickets provided by the owners of the coffee plantations and other employers requiring foreign labour. But when in 1901 the Italian Govern-

ment issued a decree whereby permits to go to Brazil were refused to all persons who did not pay for their own fares, the numbers rapidly diminished. Thus they fell from 20,972 in 1895-1899 to 197,462 in 1900-1904, to 114,006 in 1905-1909, rose to 123,149 in 1910-1914, and fell again to practically nothing at all during the war. The conditions on the coffee estates were very bad, in some cases incredibly so, as most of the fazendeiros, or owners of plantations, and their bailiffs were little better than nigger-drivers, themselves often of partly negro blood, and they treated their employés in a manner reminiscent of the worst period of the feudal ages. As the economic conditions of the fazendeiros declined, the owners could not afford to pay a living wage or provide for the most elementary needs of civilized life, while the cost of living was far higher than in Europe. After the war, Italian emigration has ranged around about 10,000 per annum, while between 3,000 and 5,000 returned home every year.

Emigration to other overseas countries has been on a much smaller scale. The figure for Canada was only 493 in 1880-1884; it increased to 41,172 in 1905-1909, to 10,582 in 1910-1914. After the war it reached 10,987 in 1920, and fell in 1924 to 2,516, and rose to 5,245 in 1927. Before the war a few hundreds went every year to Australia, and in 1910-1914 the annual average was 1,200. Since the war it has begun to increase, but did not attain the previous figure of 1,200. There may be a further increase in the coming years, although the maximum total number now admitted is 3,000 a year. There are active and prosperous, but not numerous, colonies in Uruguay, Paraguay, Chile, Peru, Cuba, Mexico, etc., in some of which countries Italians exercise considerable influence.

Let us now see what the general consequences of emigration have been. There are at present some 9,000,000 Italians residing abroad, of whom the majority are in overseas countries. This is the result of a movement which has amounted to several hundred thousands per annum for many years. Some are permanent residents in the countries to which they have emigrated and are not at all likely ever to return to Italy, while their children will certainly remain abroad and eventually, with few exceptions, be absorbed by the alien race among whom they reside. Others

are temporary migrants who will sooner or later return to Italy to settle permanently.

The high wages secured in foreign countries undoubtedly constituted an advantage for Italian emigrants, as they were able to live better than was possible in Italy twenty or thirty years ago and at the same time to save money. They also acquired greater mobility; the majority of the inhabitants of the rural areas, especially in the South, whence came the largest contingent to emigration, had hardly ever left their native villages, except in the case of those who served in the army, whereas they have now accustomed themselves to travelling thousands of miles, and think nothing of crossing the ocean a dozen times or the Alps thirty or forty times in their lifetime. On the other hand, it must be remembered that there has been a good deal of exploitation of the emigrants, that many were induced by unscrupulous emigration agents to throw up their jobs at home or sell their possessions and go to some distant land in the hope of finding an Eldorado, only to be robbed and swindled or sweated in intolerable conditions for a meagre wage. Others, while able to earn good wages, voluntarily underwent the severest hardships, stinting themselves of everything except the barest necessities, and living in the most squalid conditions in order to save as much money as possible. Life in the large cities, industrial centres, mining and construction camps, especially in the United States, is conducive to the acquisition of tuberculosis and other diseases, alcoholism and immorality, while industrial accidents take a heavy toll, especially among foreign labourers, who in some overseas countries are inadequately protected and insured.

While the effects of this migration of peoples on immigration countries is, on the whole, very beneficial—without it their rapid development and enormous increase of wealth would have been impossible—its effects on Italy are much more doubtful. At first emigration was a useful safety-valve. The pressure of population was attenuated, wages at home were increased, usury, which was the curse of the small Southern towns and villages, largely reduced. Property became more widely distributed, as the money brought or sent home by emigrants was usually invested in the purchase of land and the building of new houses,

and the landlords found it worth their while to sell parts of their estates in small allotments to the returned emigrants who were prepared to pay a higher price for land than its market value. In some foreign countries the import of Italian goods has been fostered by immigration, as they were purchased, not only by the immigrants themselves, but also by the natives who followed their example.

But there were also serious drawbacks which soon began to make themselves felt. In the first place, the enormous numbers of emigrants constituted an alarming symptom just before the war, and in some parts of the country the demographic cohesion of the nation was menaced. In Basilicata large areas were almost depopulated, and the scarcity of labour was seriously affecting agriculture. The departure of such large numbers of adult males not only rendered work less efficient, but also reflected unfavourably on family life. Many of the emigrants were married men who left their wives behind, and, while the majority provided for their families, a not insignificant minority contracted other alliances and set up new families abroad, leaving their legitimate ones in dire distress. Similarly, the married women, separated from their husbands for so long, were not always faithful. This led to domestic tragedies and crimes of passion in districts where family affection had been formerly exceptionally strong.

The rural areas of Italy, especially in the South, were soon filled with returned emigrants. But these men introduced no improvements in agriculture nor any new industries or progressive business methods, as the great majority of them had earned their living by unskilled labour, while most of those who had been successful in business and improved their own conditions did not return home. Even before the present restrictive measures enacted by the United States, only persons in good health were admitted to that and other immigration countries. Emigration consequently resulted in a form of survival of the fittest, the less fit remaining in Italy or returning to it; this fact accounts for the low death rate of many American cities, as the majority of those who suffered from the strenuous life, or were maimed by industrial accidents, came home to die, and thus do not figure on the debit side of American vital statistics.

Nor did emigration improve the moral or spiritual value of the emigrant. The repatriated emigrant was apt to lose his original attractive qualities of kindness, simplicity, courtesy, and love of family, and to acquire unlimited cheek, often amounting to insolence, to show contempt for the "old country" and its ways, to attribute no value to anything except material well-being, and to acquire vices formerly unknown in the unsophisticated villages of Italy.

Another disadvantage of emigration was that the millions of Italians residing abroad were in a certain sense hostages in the hands of foreign countries, and materially diminished Italy's freedom of action in international politics.

Finally, we should not forget that the very mobility of the emigrant constituted an economic disadvantage for Italy. We have seen how when there was a slump in the trade of this or that foreign country, thousands of Italian emigrants flocked home, because when unemployed they could live more cheaply in Italy than abroad, whereas when there was a boom in trade in the foreign countries they at once set forth again. But both movements were to a large extent independent of conditions at home, for if emigration was at first, on the whole, the result of poverty in Italy, the increase or decrease both of emigrants and of those returning home occurred independently of the temporarily better or worse conditions in Italy. Thus Italy always bore the burden; if trade was bad both in Italy and, say, the United States, the emigrants came home and increased unemployment in Italy, while if there was a demand for labour abroad, large numbers of Italians emigrated, even if in Italy there were possibilities of increased development, and by their very exodus contributed to eliminate those possibilities.

The war practically suspended emigration from Italy, and masses of emigrants flocked home, as there was less demand for labour everywhere, and most Governments, belligerent or neutral, were anxious to employ as few foreign workers as possible. The sudden repatriation of hundreds of thousands of Italians constituted a serious handicap for Italy, and if she had entered the war at the same time as the other Powers the situation would have been even more difficult.

As soon as the Armistice was concluded, emigration

recommenced, although on a smaller scale and in a more irregular fashion than before. The restrictive measures of the United States caused a very considerable set-back; the numbers emigrating to that country since 1924 averaged between 35,000 and 40,000 per annum. Other countries which had formerly employed foreign labour on a large scale were no longer in a position to absorb it. Thus from 28,311 emigrants in 1918 we jump to 253,224 in 1919 and to 614,611 in 1920; then comes a drop to 201,291 in 1921 owing to the American restrictions, an increase to close on 400,000 in 1923, and subsequently a steady decline to 239,332 in 1927. Germany, which in the years 1910-1914 absorbed large numbers of Italian workers, only received 2,821 in 1920, 1,811 in 1921, 1,688 in 1925. The figures for Switzerland tell the same tale. Those for the Argentine also show a reduction, but to a lesser degree. France, on the other hand, shows an increase. Whereas in the period 1910-1914 the yearly average was 70,000, in 1920 it was 157,025, it sank to 44,782 in 1921, rose to 201,715 in 1924, fell again to 145,520 in 1925, to 111,252 in 1926, and to 136,783 in 1927.

A few words must be said concerning Italian agricultural emigration to France. After the war, although the majority of Italians emigrating to that country were still attracted by the industrial areas, a certain number were drawn towards the rural areas, especially in the South and South-West of France. The losses in the war and the general tendency of the French rural population to migrate to the towns resulted in a scarcity of labour in several agricultural departments. A number of agricultural labourers were attracted from Italy, as from other countries; the Emigration Commissariat intervened to regulate the movement, and a number of families were sent to work on French estates. A good many land-owning farmers sold their holdings in Italy to buy others in France, when land was being sold very cheap owing to the lack of labour, and a few secured good bargains. Others were deceived into buying bad land at an excessive price, and the Government enacted measures to prevent this form of exploitation. The movement, although comparatively on a small scale, aroused a good deal of attention in France and in Italy, and in both countries it caused a certain anxiety—in Italy

because it implied an exodus of Italian capital, and a loss, which might become permanent, of a good class of peasants whom Italy could ill afford to lose; in France because it was found that some of these rural districts might become denationalized by having a predominantly alien population in close touch with its own Government, which helped to provide schools, churches, clubs, credit institutions, etc. As a matter of fact, the movement was not on as large a scale as was claimed by alarmists. The total figures do not amount to more than 30,000 or 40,000, and have now very greatly diminished.

If we take the figures of the returned emigrants, we find that in the post-war years there was here a steady increase as regards European countries, and an irregular decrease from overseas countries, but the figures relating to European countries are in reality much larger, as it is difficult to compile complete statistics.

Had this decrease of emigration been foretold before the war it would have been regarded as a disaster, as it was then generally believed that Italy could not continue to support her growing population, and that no further great internal development was possible. There was a generally diffused "defeatist" attitude with regard to Italy's possibilities. Fortunately, the progress of Italian agriculture and industry since the war has not borne out these gloomy forebodings, and whereas there was in the years immediately after the war an increase of unemployment—which were also the years of the highest post-war emigration—unemployment has very largely decreased since 1922, and the expanding economic development will, it is hoped, absorb a large proportion of the increase of population. A certain number will, no doubt, continue to emigrate, but emigration will no longer be regarded as an urgent necessity or as a dominant feature of Italian economic life.

The attitude of the Government and of public opinion towards emigration is profoundly changed from what it was in the past. As Signor Mussolini said in his introduction to the report on emigration for 1924-1925: "Our demographic exuberance will not exhaust itself because we cannot change our natures, and do not intend to do so. In order to maintain it, it is our duty to exploit all the resources of our soil. That is what we are doing. But

as this is a task which requires time, the emigration phenomenon will continue. It may be that it will resume a more accelerated pace and be as large as it was in past years. We may admit, as I do myself, that emigration is an evil, as it deprives our people of active forces which go to constitute the red corpuscles of anæmic foreign lands. But it will be a lesser evil if it is prepared, selected, financed, and organized. Its power will be more appreciated, and it will carry more weight in the balance of international values."

Emigration is thus no longer considered an object for "sob-stuff" among the charitable and the sentimentally democratic, nor as a proof of the failure of the bourgeois Government to solve the Italian economic problem, as the Socialists were wont to assert, nor even as a great national asset because it helped to correct the unfavourable balance of trade. Under the guidance of Signor Giuseppe De Michelis, who was Commissioner-General of Emigration from 1920 until the post was suppressed in 1927, the movement was strictly regulated, and no one was allowed to emigrate unless he was provided with a labour contract from an employer abroad, guaranteed by the proper foreign authorities and the local Italian Consulate, or with an undertaking by a near relation to provide for him, or some other similar document, and emigration was prohibited to certain countries where conditions of the labour market were known to be bad. Signor De Michelis, whose extensive knowledge of the problem was universally recognized, also tried to exploit emigration for the good of the country—*i.e.*, to supply Italian workers to those who needed them only when the best conditions were offered—it was a sort of auction to the highest bidder. This policy was chiefly adopted with regard to emigrants required in France for the devastated areas. The attempt to organize a system of land exploitation and development in under-populated overseas countries—Latin America and elsewhere—was less successful, and it was, further, not in conformity with the new tendencies in modern Italy, and has been in consequence practically abandoned.

The Italy of to-day would no longer be content, even if the gates of the overseas Paradise were opened wide once more to see hundreds of thousands of her best and strongest

sons resume the paths of emigration and the humble rôle of hewers of wood and drawers of water for foreign taskmasters, working exclusively for the development and enrichment of foreign lands, and be eventually absorbed by foreign peoples and lost to the old country. If the wages are earned by the Italian worker, and if a part of them is sent home to Italy, not only is the rest spent abroad, but the work for which those wages were paid—the railways, the bridges, the tunnels, the coal extracted from the mine, the innumerable new buildings, the desert pampas or prairies converted into fields of waving corn, created by Italian hands and often cemented by Italian blood—that remains to the foreigner. So also does the interest of the capital employed remain in foreign hands, because the capital is foreign. This state of things is no longer in harmony with the new spirit in Italy.

—The most obvious and satisfactory solution of the Italian demographic problem is that Italy should possess colonies in which her sons could settle and prosper under the Italian flag. Other great nations with a less rapidly growing population do possess such colonies in abundance, to a far greater extent than their citizens can exploit. Italy, on the other hand, came late into the field of colonial competition, when all the most suitable areas had already been occupied or ear-marked by others. The pressing need for economic and demographic expansion led a small number of enterprising and courageous men to explore the unknown regions of Africa, thereby achieving fame for their country. Cecchi, Camperio, Bottego, and many others organized expeditions of scientific importance, encouraged by the Italian Geographical Society and the Society for Commercial Exploration in Africa, and not a few of them lost their lives in these quests. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mancini, took a keen interest in these undertakings. But after 1885 exploration was discouraged under the successive Depretis Cabinets, and no more expeditions were undertaken for many years.

A certain section of public opinion began, however, to realize the necessity that Italy, like other great countries, should acquire territories suitable for colonization or whence she could draw supplies of raw materials necessary for her industries. But the available territories were few. The first

point occupied was the Bay of Assab in the Red Sea (1869), but only as a coaling station for the old Florio-Rubattino Steamship Company; owing to the objections raised at the time by Great Britain, Turkey, and Egypt, Assab was not formally annexed until 1880. Massawah and other points were occupied during the following years, and in 1890 these various possessions were unified in a single colony under the name of Eritrea.

It was hoped and believed at the time that the new colony would prove suitable for settlement by Italians, and that at least a part of the stream of Italian emigration might be attracted thither, instead of to foreign lands. The coastal area and the lowlands are tropically hot and often malarious, whereas on the uplands of the interior the climate is moderate and healthy. But the war with Abyssinia made colonization difficult, and the defeat at Adua put an end to all idea of it. The exaggerated optimism with which Eritrea had been regarded in the early days of the occupation was succeeded by an equally exaggerated pessimism, both being due to a lack of knowledge and experience of tropical countries. The colony came to be looked upon as a bad bargain, and public opinion for many years ceased to take any interest in it and almost tried to forget its very existence. Later, when with the general increase of prosperity and cultural development the idea of colonial and economic expansion revived, attention was turned rather to the possibilities of North Africa. But the Italo-Turkish War of 1911-1912 provided unexpected evidence of the utility of Eritrea in at least one respect, inasmuch as the Ascari, or native troops of the colony, proved extremely useful for the campaign against the Turks and Arabs.

In the meanwhile, the internal development of the colony had been proceeding satisfactorily, almost unnoticed by the public, and if it was unsuited to colonization by white men, it became a useful trade centre for a large area of East Africa and even for Arabia, and produced useful supplies of certain raw materials—cotton, oleaginous seeds, bananas, indigo, tobacco, etc.

Another colony is Somaliland, which was occupied in the early years of the twentieth century, and placed under civil administration in 1910. The agricultural possibilities of the territory have been developed, especially in recent

years, and the cotton crop promises to be of considerable value for the Italian market. Reclamation and drainage works have been carried out in the basins of the rivers Juba and Webi Shebeli, and one undertaking, conducted under the auspices of the Duke of the Abruzzi, has already proved very successful. It is hoped that the colony will in time supply the Italian cotton industry with a large part of its requirements in cotton. But this country is not suitable for colonization by white settlers.

The occupation of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, effected as a result of the Italo-Turkish War, offered greater opportunities for colonization. The climate is moderate and the soil fertile wherever water can be found, and water is found at no great depth below the surface. The vicissitudes of the Arab rebellion and considerations of expense retarded colonization, and during the World War the interior was evacuated, only a few points along the coast being retained. After the Armistice, when demagoguery reigned supreme in Italy, the attempt to confer self-government on the natives led to disastrous results. But within the last few years a policy of firmness and vigour combined with justice has restored order in the two colonies, the whole area of which has been reoccupied. The agreements with Great Britain first, and later with Egypt, have settled the eastern frontier of Cyrenaica, and commercial and agricultural development have proceeded apace. Count Volpi, as governor of Tripolitania, and General Mombelli in Cyrenaica, did a great deal for that development, and their successors are following the same path. In Tripolitania a wide area is being colonized by white and native labour with satisfactory results, and there are now some 45,000 Italians settled in the colony, whose agricultural activities are prospering. Schemes of a similar nature are now on foot for the development of Cyrenaica. Yet even these colonies will never be able to absorb more than a small portion of Italy's surplus population. It is estimated that in a few years' time some 300,000 Italians will be settled in them, whereas the annual increase of Italy's population is about 400,000.

But, given this rapid increase of population, it might well seem as if, with the limited possibilities of emigration, the colonies, and internal development, the population problem were insoluble. A solution will, however, be found.

There are in various parts of the world immense underpopulated areas, requiring intelligent labour for the development of their resources which the whole world needs and will continue to need even more urgently as the population grows. It is only the emigration countries of Europe—above all, Italy—which can supply the necessary skilled and unskilled labour. But such conditions must be established as will guarantee, not only a full security for the life and property of the migrant worker, but also his personal dignity; he must not be treated as an inferior, nor forced to renounce his ties with his mother country. Italy wishes to keep in as close touch as possible with her children abroad, and even if many of them end by settling definitely in some foreign land and becoming its citizens, she does not wish to forget them nor be forgotten by them; moral, spiritual, and intellectual ties are as important as those of citizenship.

Some Governments might regard any such measures concerning immigration as constituting an encroachment on their own sovereignty. But the answer is that if they want foreign immigrants they must offer conditions acceptable to them and to the Government of the countries of which they are citizens.

For the development of these unexploited areas the collaboration of many elements is needed—labour, skilled and unskilled, technical ability, capital, and, when the undertaking is agricultural, land. Land can only be provided by the immigration country, technical skill and capital by the immigration and the emigration country and also by third countries other than these two. At present, capital is chary of embarking on colonization ventures because it does not always trust—not without reason—the Governments of countries whose prospects would appear in other respects most promising. But the difficulty might be overcome by means of international agreements. Signor Mussolini himself stated that he proposed to entrust to the League of Nations the solution of this essentially international problem. This will, indeed, be a test of that body's capacity to solve first-class questions.

*"Qui si parrà la tua nobilitate."*¹

The emigration policy of the Italian Government has

¹ Dante, *Inf.*, II., 9.

undergone a radical transformation during the last few years. Instead of regarding the emigrants as a class apart, to be coddled and wrapped up in cotton-wool, they are treated as ordinary citizens who happen to go abroad for purposes of work. No one is encouraged to emigrate, and obstacles are placed in the way of all incitements to emigration. Whereas in former times every effort was made to overcome the restrictions on Italian immigration imposed by foreign countries, these restrictions are ignored to-day, and almost welcomed. Instead of going hat in hand to implore foreigners to employ Italian labour, everything is done to keep the Italian at home and provide him with the best opportunities to develop his own country. Under the former legislation any Italian residing abroad could send for his relations or friends in Italy if he undertook to provide for or find employment for them on arrival, whereas now passports are issued only to near relatives of Italians living abroad, and the latter must return to Italy to fetch them. The object of this measure is not only to restrict emigration, but also to encourage Italians living abroad to pay periodical visits to Italy and regain touch with the old country.

Italians do not profess to be satisfied with all the provisions of the Peace Treaties, especially with those whereby rich and extensive colonial territories were assigned to the Powers who already possessed vast colonial empires, whereas Italy, who had more need of such outlets than any other country, was given nothing. Italy has no intention of encroaching on the rights of others, and can afford to wait. For the present, by developing her internal resources and improving her agriculture and her industry, she may yet find room for a part of her growing population. But when the time comes for the reshuffling of colonial territories suitable for white settlers, or production of raw materials, Italy will certainly demand that a fair share be allotted to her. That she came out of the Peace Conference as badly as she did was largely, although not wholly, due to the inadequacy of some of her own representatives and to the unseemly squabbles among themselves and among the various parties and tendencies in Italy herself. This, there is every reason to hope, will never happen again, as Italians have learnt from bitter experience the cost of internal dis-

ensions when dealing with foreign Powers, and a new international gathering to settle the problems which may arise will find the nation a compact unit, determined to secure a satisfactory solution for its aspirations. To satisfy these aspirations, which, as far as the population problem is concerned, correspond to a real necessity, would prove not only advantageous for Italy, but also for the rest of the world, as it would mean a further strengthening of the general peace by eliminating causes of unrest and dissatisfaction and also by bringing new areas under cultivation and rendering them productive.

XVII

NON-POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

THE intellectual growth of Italy has followed a course by no means always in exact correspondence with her political development. In the Renaissance the Italian people attained a very high degree of intellectual and artistic development, while Italy as a nation did not exist in any form, large areas of the country were under foreign domination and politically the people were at the lowest ebb. Later, when intellectual production had declined, the country still continued to be politically of no account. During the French Revolution and Napoleonic era there was a striking intellectual revival in Italy, and at the same time the country began to have some significance as a political entity. After the Restoration of 1815, when Italy was again reduced to a "geographical expression," she went through a ferment of political ideas which found scope in a literary output of remarkable value. The Risorgimento produced little in the field of literature except the satirical poems of Giuseppe Giusti, no art, but a great deal of good music. Since Italy has become a nation her intellectual output has been considerable, but not equal in all its branches, nor of the highest order save in the case of a few individual authors. To-day, amid the vast upheaval of political, economic, and social progress, and the "accelerated rhythm" of Italian life, there is again a ferment of new ideas in art, literature, and music, but we are still waiting for a definite line which could be regarded as a true expression of the *Zeitgeist*.

During the immediate post-Risorgimento period the leading figures of Italian literature were Giosuè Carducci, Giovanni Pascoli, Lorenzo Stecchetti and Mario Rapisardi, the neo-classical Carducci, as powerful in prose as in poetry, being the greatest of them all. The realistic tales of the Sicilian Verga, the witty sketches of the Tuscan Renato Fucini, the delicate lyrics of Adolfo De Bosis, who

influenced many of his contemporaries, and the brilliant acy poems in Roman dialect of Cesare Pascarella, also occupy a high place in the literature of the period. The beautiful but somewhat lengthy novels of Antonio Fogazzaro achieved wide popularity for their analysis of character and their mystical spirit, imbued with Liberal Catholicism.

But soon D'Annunzio's star began to shine, and the abruzzese æsthete outstripped all his contemporaries in popular favour and in the curiosity which he aroused in the literary circles, not of Italy alone, but of the whole world. He is undoubtedly one of the strangest figures in contemporary history, and by no means solely as a man of letters. Commencing life as a pure æsthete, his early work is inspired chiefly by artistic sensuality, and from the very first he proved himself absolute master of the Italian language, which he played upon with the skill of a great pianist over his instrument. He exercised a profound influence for many years, and while he aroused bitter criticism for his contempt for the traditions of the day and for what was regarded as the essential immorality of his message, no one could deny the magic of his style and the beauty of his imagery. A large number of young men regarded him with deep devotion as "Il Maestro," and many tried to imitate him, usually with very little success. His activity and influence were not limited to literature. In his young days he had coquetted with Socialism, and had, indeed, sat for a brief space in Parliament, sitting on the benches of the Extreme Left. But his travels in Europe, particularly in Germany, convinced him that Italy was lagging behind other nations, that intellectual and æsthetic output were not enough for national greatness any more than they had been in the Italian Renaissance, and that an effort must be made to achieve political and economic power. The past glories of Italy appealed to him in particular; his novel *Il Fuoco* is redolent of the æsthetic spirit of Venice, but in his drama *La Nave* he invoked a revival in modern Italy of the maritime greatness of the city of the Lagoons. Occasional allusions to political affairs, such as his words about the "amarissimo Adriatico," so defined on account of Austria's domination over it, and his attacks against Austria on other occasions,

had wide repercussions beyond purely literary circles. The Libyan war inspired some of his finest lyrics, for he regarded that campaign as the beginning of Italy's expansion as a great Power, and in the enthusiasm aroused by his attitude on this occasion the somewhat unedifying story of his private life began to be forgotten.

On the outbreak of the World War D'Annunzio at once strongly championed Italian intervention, and by his speeches and articles, notably his famous address in May, 1915, at Quarto—on the anniversary of the day on which Garibaldi and his Thousand had sailed for Sicily in 1860 and on the selfsame spot—contributed very materially to influence public opinion. As soon as Italy did declare war he joined up, and distinguished himself by innumerable and astonishing feats of valour on land, on the sea, and in the air. After the war his action at Fiume belongs to history, but there is no doubt that it was his literary genius which secured him such a wide following among a people peculiarly sensitive to literature, and made many of his errors be overlooked. After the evacuation of Fiume his sympathies were with Fascism, and, indeed, that movement owed much of its inspiration and many of its outward aspects and manifestations to D'Annunzio. The origins of the Fascist syndical and corporative system must be sought partly in his Statuto del Carnaro, the strange poetical constitution which he conferred on Fiume. But his literary output now ceased almost entirely, except for the publication of occasional fragments, and his intellectual influence on his contemporaries declined rapidly. He has few imitators to-day, for his best literary work belongs to an Italy which is past; but he is still appreciated as a precursor of many present developments, and a national edition of his works is in course of publication.

In the first years of the twentieth century, independently of isolated geniuses like D'Annunzio, a new school of thought was arising, a revolt against the traditions of the past. The inspiration was not always indigenous, but largely of French origin. The Futurist movement, of which the leaders were Marinetti, Soffici, Papini, Ungaretti, was very French in thought, and many of its votaries, including Marinetti himself, often wrote in French. Their revolt was against style and tradition and university education;

they advocated a new art based on ultra-modernity, they rejected all that had been considered traditionally beautiful in the past, preferring lines of steel and concrete to the tracery of marble; Marinetti at one time actually demanded the destruction of all ancient buildings. His poems seemed to most readers sheer rubbish, with their shrieks, exclamation marks, meaningless sound and fury, while the works of the Futurist painters—confused splashes of colour, figures with innumerable arms and legs scattered about promiscuously, cubes of staring hues juxtaposed in senseless disorder—had little to distinguish them from the daubs of children or the imaginings of lunatics. Yet amid this welter of nonsense there was a certain sincerity of research after something original, a desire to be freed from the shackles of tradition and to get more into harmony with the spirit of the age. In Milan and Florence, above all, there were groups of young men of promise, some of them destined to produce sounder work in later times without losing their originality, such as Prezolini, Papini, Soffici, and others, and their reviews *Lacerba* and *La Voce* contained the suggestions of a new spirit. One merit of this rebel movement is that it brought literature and life closer together. The man of letters, no longer isolated in his ivory tower of classical models and traditions and dazzled by the perfections of style alone, began to take a keener interest in what was going on around him, and the ordinary man of no particularly literary tendencies or outlook realized that Italian letters might have a message and a meaning for him also. It was a movement preceding that which made politics something of real interest even to the non-political citizen, to the mere man-in-the-street.

In the world of learning much was being achieved. Italians gained distinction in classical scholarship, in philology, in historical research, in the sciences. The output of scholarly and scientific publications swelled to large proportions, and much of it achieved world-wide reputation. But many of the Italian scholars were seekers after minutiae rather than men endowed with a wide synthesis of outlook. This was particularly the case among the historians, who were apt to devote themselves to the study of some very limited period of history or one institution of a single city republic, rather than to wider subjects of more

general application. One of the few exceptions was Pasquale Villari, whose works on Savonarola and Machiavelli, now recognized as classics, and many other essays, were on subjects of national and even universal interest, and had a bearing on the problems of the day. There was, then, no complete history of the Venetian Republic later than that of Romanin, nor of Florence more recent than that of Capponi. When Countess Cesaresco-Martinengo wrote her excellent history of the Risorgimento in English, there was no work of real historic value in Italian on the whole of that period, although there were many admirable studies of single phases of it. Another fault of Italian scholarship at that time was its too complete subjection to German example—a defect not peculiar to Italians. For a rising scholar a year passed in a German university, a German degree, and a thesis printed in German opened the way for a successful career. More than one man of very secondary merits acquired an undeserved reputation simply because he appeared with the cloak of German scholarship on his shoulders.

But towards the beginning of the twentieth century Italian men of letters and scholars showed signs of becoming more alive. Many of them took to writing for the Press, and the fact that the daily newspapers printed articles on scientific and historical subjects was evidence of the greater interest which the ordinary public was taking in such matters. They travelled more and saw what was being done abroad, and after a period of mere imitation of foreign models they realized that to attain the level of the best foreign work it was necessary to produce something that was not imitation of the foreigner.

Education was not in a very satisfactory condition at that time. There were many admirable teachers in the schools and the universities, but the systems had many serious faults. The universities were far too exclusively places where students went to hear professors deliver a certain number of rather dull lectures, and where they eventually secured degrees. In the larger universities, especially in the more frequented faculties of law and medicine, there was too little direct contact between professors and students. Many of the former were busy professional men or even politicians, who devoted but a small part of their time to

teaching, while the professors in the smaller towns often lived in some near-by larger city, and sometimes held two chairs in different universities. Some professors of the provincial universities were constantly in Rome to attend Parliament or sit on commissions and boards. A number of the leading political men were and indeed are university professors, but have, of course, little time to devote to their lectures while in office, and consequently have to appoint substitutes. There have always been numerous exceptions, and in every university one found professors who devoted the whole of their time and activity to their academic tasks and kept in the closest possible contact with their students. One of the writer's happiest memories of his university days is that of the cordial intimacy with several of his professors and of the enthusiasm for learning which they imparted to all who came in contact with them.

In the last years of the nineteenth century the discipline of the students had become greatly relaxed, owing to the general absence of respect for all forms of authority and the interference of politics in university life, and there were frequent strikes of students against unpopular or too strict professors or regulations making the examinations more difficult. The students and even their parents had come to regard a degree or pass diploma as a right acquired by the mere fact of having their names inscribed in the university registers for four or six years, and study was often limited to learning the notes of the lectures attended by heart, for there was little encouragement given to outside reading. The faculties opening the door to professional or bureaucratic careers were the most largely attended, while those of literature, science, and engineering were far less frequented. The number of professional men and of candidates for the civil services was consequently excessive, with the result that constant pressure was brought to bear on the Government, usually with success, to provide ever more jobs, many of them quite unnecessary. Lawyers abounded in every walk of life, especially in politics, which were greatly affected by the legal mentality, in a none too desirable manner; there were, indeed, more lawyers, or, at least, graduates in law, in the Chamber of Deputies than all other categories put together.

Among the older generation, the men born in the 'seventies and 'eighties, a deep vein of scepticism and cynicism prevailed in the intellectual world. It was unfashionable to be enthusiastic, to believe ardently in anything, to respect any person or idea. Religion, patriotism, admiration for art, literature, or music were at a discount in certain highbrow circles, and these influenced many men who wished to appear superior persons, knowing too much to be taken in by ideas appealing only to the ingenuous.

Yet there were undoubted signs of improvement in the last decades before the war. The various political movements which began to take root—at first certain aspects of Socialism, later Nationalism, to some extent even Futurism—supplied ideals to be striven after, and helped to counteract the prevailing scepticism. Even the love of sport, which was assuming considerable importance, contributed to a revival of idealism, and proved a useful antidote to the more unedifying tendencies of the day. Sport and physical training are very recent developments in Italy. The writer remembers how in his student days the gymnastic classes, then practically the only form of exercise provided for, were deservedly unpopular, for there was absolutely nothing attractive in those monotonous efforts performed in damp, gloomy, dusty rooms. Every pretext was seized upon to be exempted from them.

But outside the school a new love of sport was arising and spreading among all classes. Pallone, a strenuous ball game, had long been popular, but the skill required was so great that it was practically limited to professional players, and for the public merely represented an attractive spectacle. Mountaineering came into fashion in the latter part of the nineteenth century; Sella, a relative of the great statesman, was one of the foremost climbers of his time, and the late Queen Margherita, although not, strictly speaking, an Alpinist, was a wonderful walker in the Alps, and provided an example which found many followers. The Italian Alpine Club also acquired great importance, and promoted the formation of numerous students' sections. Not long before the war the love for winter sports began to take root, and ski-ing and bob-sleigh competitions were held in the Alps, and also in the Tuscan Apennines and in the Abruzzi.

The advent of the bicycle rapidly made that form of sport immensely popular; every boy aspired to possess a bicycle, and bicycle racing was for a time all the rage; the chief races were attended by immense crowds, and the champions of that sport became national heroes. Football was introduced a little later, as a revival of the medieval game of calcio, whence football is said to be derived, and was at first played according to the rules of the former and in the costumes of the period; but very soon it evolved into ordinary Soccer, and as such spread rapidly all over Italy. Football clubs sprang up like mushrooms, and several of the teams conquered European reputations, beating some of the most famous and older foreign ones. There is now hardly a town or village without its football club and ground; the writer remembers seeing on a Sunday in a little town of the Roman province no less than four games of football going on at the same time. Cricket has never taken on, and golf is a purely foreign importation.

Rowing, sailing, tennis, motor-cycling, and motoring acquired ever-increasing popularity. The Italian Touring Club, originally a cycling club, developed into an institution of the first magnitude for the promotion of sport of every kind and issued numerous admirable publications calculated to arouse interest in and the practice of physical exercise, as well as the study of the beauties of art and nature in Italy.

In various parts of the country, such as the Lazio, the Tuscan Maremma, certain districts of the South, Sicily and Sardinia, where riding is still to a large extent an ordinary means of locomotion, and where the cattle roaming in the great plains and in the woods and *macchie* of the hills and coasts are tended by mounted herdsmen, equestrian sports have always been very common, and are now encouraged by the authorities and private organizations. Country horse races are very frequent and popular in those parts of Italy, and on special festivals tilting at the ring, the *giuoco della rosa*, and other similar games are practised and attended by large crowds. The *butteri* (herdsmen) of the Roman Campagna are among the finest horsemen in the world, and on one celebrated occasion competed successfully with Buffalo Bill's cowboys. In

some places traditional horse races are held, the riders wearing ancient costumes; the most famous of these races is the Palio of Siena, dating from the early Middle Ages, and offering a spectacle of wild excitement, brilliant colour, and picturesque ceremonies, such as can be seen nowhere else. Originally of interest for the Sienese people alone, it has now become an all-Italian festival, attended by visitors from every province.

Ordinary horse-racing is also a popular sport, and all the larger and most of the smaller cities have one or more race-courses, and the great races of Milan and Rome are of international importance. The riding of the officers of the mounted arms, as taught at the schools of Tor di Quinto and Pinerolo, is unsurpassed in any country, and even the riding of the N.C.O.'s and men is of the highest order, especially the cross-country rides over long distances and many obstacles.

The fox is hunted in the Roman Campagna, the Brughiera di Gallarate near Milan, and a few other places, but, even apart from the expense, this cannot become a generally popular sport in a country where agriculture is as intensively practised as in Italy. The same remark applies to preserved shooting, which exists only on a small number of estates, whereas rough shooting on non-preserved land is a favourite pastime with all classes.

The *Gazzetta dello Sport*, one of the best sporting papers in existence, acquired a wider circulation among the working classes than almost any other newspaper.

The love of sport undoubtedly served to improve the physique of the people of all classes, especially in the cities, where the conditions of life would have been otherwise less favourable than in the rural areas. But there was still a repugnance to sport in certain circles and groups. The Socialist propaganda was definitely hostile to it, because the leaders, besides being themselves usually men of non-sporting tastes, feared that if it took hold of the working classes it would distract them from political activity and promote through sport a certain *camaraderie* between different classes, attenuating class hatred, and in this they were undoubtedly right. Later, when they saw that it was impossible to keep the masses away from sport, proletarian sport organizations and clubs were created, but without

much success. Moreover, among the intellectuals of the older generation sport continued to be regarded with a certain disapproval. A person of middle age and occupying a position of responsibility could not indulge in any form of sport without loss of dignity. In the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, in the higher ranks of the civil service, and in the learned world the devotees of sport were few and far between, and those who were addicted to it indulged in it in secret, almost as if it were one of the less reputable forms of vice. A year or two before the war a young man of my acquaintance had been able to buy a motor-cycle almost new for a very small sum from a university professor, who had imported it from England, but had been shamed out of using it by his colleagues, because they regarded such antics as incompatible with the professorial dignity. To-day such an attitude would be inconceivable.

The development of sport and physical exercise generally proved of immense value during the war, especially mountaineering, ski-ing, riding, and motoring; the Italian chauffeurs acquired a well-merited reputation for the univalued skill with which they drove their machines along the giddy mountain roads of the Alps and of Macedonia, and the staying power shown by men from all parts of Italy in the terribly strenuous mountain warfare came as a surprise to many who had not realized the progress made in this field in the past years. The memories of the war served to intensify and generalize the love of sport still further, for its usefulness and necessity were brought home to all. Fascism, essentially a youth movement, also promoted sport in every form, and the leaders of the party, beginning with Signor Mussolini himself, a keen horseman and motorist, are, as a rule, sport enthusiasts. At every great sporting event members of the Government or "hierarchs" of the party are always present to give away the prizes and make speeches encouraging the players. All the organizations, official, semi-official, or private, have their sports sections, and this is also the case with the industrial undertakings, the various branches of the civil service, the railways, etc.

The war, of course, exercised a profound influence on intellectual development and education. While the fight-

ing was going on study was inevitably to a large extent suspended, as many of the professors and most of the students were engaged in more dangerous work. The universities indeed contributed a very great share to the national effort, and an immense number of their members became officers and many of them fell in action. But apart from the temporary suspension of school and university work, the men who had been through the burning fiery furnace of the war were loth to return to the class-room to resume their interrupted studies, and many others had taken advantage of the special facilities accorded to combatants to secure their degrees. Large numbers of half-trained lawyers and doctors were unloaded on society and dire results were predicted, but fortunately the trouble proved less serious in the end, and the incompetent were gradually frozen out, while the new generation issuing from the universities after the war soon made good the losses suffered in the past.

More serious was the psychological upheaval and longer in duration, while the conception of many values was altered, not always, especially at first, for the better. The temporary degeneration of literary output was characterized by the works of Guido Da Verona, to quote but one author. The Da Verona phenomenon is an interesting one in many ways. This writer personified certain aspects of the war and post-war spirit very faithfully, even though his novels cannot be regarded as being works of great artistic merit. He had indeed begun to write before the war, but his greatest successes were achieved after it. He appealed to a public in which every young civil servant eking out a precarious existence on an inadequate salary aspired to become a multi-millionaire by setting up in business as so many profiteers seemed to have done, every dressmaker's assistant had visions of herself as a film star earning thousands of lire per night, or as the wife or mistress of a millionaire. The world he described was one of hotels de luxe, gorgeous banquets and feasts, with champagne flowing like water, homard à la Newbourg, caviare and foie gras in abundance, priceless diamonds, exquisite dresses, journeys all over the world, gambling houses where millions changed hands nightly, haunts of refined vice, etc. Everyone hoped that all these delectable things

might fall to his or her lot, and Da Verona's novels, which described them in luscious language with innumerable French quotations, had an immense vogue for a time. But with the end of the illusion came the end of their success.

The war has not given birth to any really great works of art or literature, and the confusion of the first post-war period failed to increase the output. But the period of futurism and of rebellion against the past was now over, and a return to more traditional forms and styles seemed to be materializing. The new literature was emancipated from the academic shackles which had divorced the literature of the earlier age from realities and life, and there appeared to be a greater appreciation of simplicity, and of realism without brutality or vulgarity.

Among the popular writers of the day are some men like Ugo Ojetti, Alfredo Panzini, and others who were already well known before the war, but have acquired enhanced fame subsequently. Ugo Ojetti had made a reputation as an art critic and a writer of witty and slightly cynical short stories, but after the war he achieved his greatest success with his novel, *Mio figlio ferroviere*, one of the most admirable pictures of the confusion and semi-Bolshevik tendencies of post-war Italy and the beginnings of the reaction against disintegration, told in a delightfully humorous vein. Panzini in his novels and stories, which are of a very high class from an artistic point of view, also describes post-war Italy; Virgilio Brocchi depicts middle-class life, Raffaello Calzini and Marino Moretti are among the best short story writers, while Countess Daisy di Carpeletto, a young authoress of great promise, surprised the reading public with the skilful maturity and boldness of her novels of the life of the upper classes, especially *La figlia dell'uragano*, depicting a certain type of Italian woman as affected by the war. Professor Borgese, an authority on Italian and German literature, and a distinguished literary critic, produced one novel in this period, *Subè*, which, although full of artistic defects and unpleasant episodes, is characteristic as evidence of the spiritual confusion and pessimist spirit into which even the most sober writers were temporarily plunged and of their attempt to imitate some of the more uncomfortable Russian novelists.

The Sicilian Verga, who was one of the first writers to exploit the possibilities of local atmosphere, died many years ago. But many others survive. Matilde Serao, who died quite recently, has produced a number of novels on Neapolitan life, while Grazia Deledda has created an epic of Sardinia in her many novels and short stories, and given an admirable picture of the psychology, manners, and customs and somewhat melancholy character of the people of that island, which won her the Nobel prize for 1927. The late Luigi Siciliani had begun to do the same for Calabria; his output was much smaller, but included one good novel and some poetry.

Another author of real promise is Riccardo Bacchelli, whose long and curious novel *Il Diavolo al Pontelungo* has already achieved considerable success; it deals with the first Anarchist movements in Italy, promoted by the Russian Bakunin and financed by the fanatical and half crazy, but thoroughly sincere, Apulian millionaire Cafiero, the curious little international revolutionary settlement at Locarno and the preposterous attempt at a revolution in Bologna. There is no plot, but rather a series of episodes; the characters are so vivid that one's attention never flags, and although the author evidently has no sympathy with the conduct of these misguided fanatics, his disapproval is tempered by an Olympic serenity and a quiet sense of humour.

Perhaps the most prominent Italian writer of to-day is Luigi Pirandello. A man no longer young, he had written much for many years, but only sprang into fame after the war. Success has increased his prolificity, and he pours out short stories in large numbers every year, besides the plays on which his fame chiefly rests and are acted all over the world. Whimsicality is the dominant note of all his writings, and he takes an especial pleasure in depicting a strange world lying between truth and fantasy, the normal and the abnormal, the sane and the insane, and in insisting that there is no clear line of demarcation between the two.

Among the philosophers Giovanni Gentile and Benedetto Croce are the two who enjoy the highest reputation both at home and abroad.

It cannot be said that there is as yet a definitely Fascist

erature. There are innumerable men of letters who are Fascists; indeed, with the exception of the philosopher Benedetto Croce, the play-writer Roberto Bracco, and a few others, the great majority of Italian men of letters of any distinction are either Fascists or sympathizers with Fascism; this is not surprising, inasmuch as Fascism implies an idealist revival conducive to literary activity and a reaction against "politicantismo," which is the very negation of art and literature. But their writings are not in any particular way especially Fascist. The only feature which may be regarded as Fascist in many of these writers is the combination of a return to the traditions and forms of the past with the most advanced forms of modern progress. It is no longer fashionable nor a sign of modernity to despise spiritual values, to profess cynicism and scepticism and ridicule all the output of the past. On the contrary, we find everywhere a yearning after a sort of mystical spirituality and a desire to revive the ancient glories of Italy, of the Roman Empire, of the medieval republics, of the Church, and the Risorgimento. Benedetto Croce himself, a historian as well as a philosopher and a writer of the highest literary distinction, although in politics an anti-Fascist, has inspired Fascism with many of its ideas and tendencies, and has attempted to rehabilitate certain periods of Italian life and history usually regarded as those of the greatest decadence, such as the seventeenth century and the Counter-Reformation. But his recent history of Italy is more a piece of propaganda than an historical essay. Among the historians of modern Italy Gioacchino Volpi takes a high place both in the field of medieval history and that of contemporary history.

Just as certain statesmen, who had been either forgotten or reviled by their successors, such as Crispi, have now come into their own again, likewise some writers, who to the past generation had been little more than names, are now rehabilitated and regarded as forerunners of the present age. This has been the case with Alfredo Oriani, whose almost forgotten writings are now republished and widely read. In the 'eighties and 'nineties Oriani had waxed enthusiastic over the beginnings of Italy's colonial expansion and strongly supported Crispi's policy. In his *Rivolta sociale*, published in 1906, he had exalted certain traditional

spiritual values, judged Socialism not as creation but mere criticism, saw in the ascent of the proletariat the birth of a new middle class, and expressed contempt for "the cowardly theory which flattered the people, telling them that their inferiority was only due to the injustice of the laws."

There are undoubted signs of the increasing general interest in literary development, although it cannot be said that literature is as popular in Italy as it is in some other countries. Indeed, the various initiatives to promote this interest are a proof of it, while the success they have already achieved shows the possibilities of greater development. The system of conferring prizes for works of literature, which has come into considerable prominence of late years has resulted in making a number of new authors better known to the public. The Mondadori publishing house has formed an academy, composed of well-known men of letters, which confers an annual prize for a work of poetry (in 1928 the prize was conferred on the Calabrian poet, Vincenzo Gerace, for his volume of verse, *La fontana nella foresta*), and the Bagutta prize is conferred by eleven authors named by the founders, a group of men who met at a café in Via Bagutta in Milan, on a work of literature in prose or verse. Another enterprising publisher, Formiggini, of Modena, is untiring in his efforts to intensify and extend interest in literature, and the literary review *La fiera letteraria* has organized the "Festa del libro" all over Italy to increase the sale of books of all kinds; the Festa, which is strongly encouraged by the Government, is to be repeated every year. In Florence the international book fair, held every three years, has done much to arouse the interest of the Italian public in what is published abroad and also to show the remarkable progress achieved in Italy in the technique of printing and publishing and the very considerable mass of books produced in the country.

One aspect of Italian intellectual life, which has always existed in some measure, is the interest in the ancient Roman tradition. One cannot stay in Italy for a week without coming up against it. It is a living thing to almost every Italian of whatever province or class. Innumerable writers have been affected by it, and found in it the inspira-

on for much of their work. This was undoubtedly the case with Carducci in the last century, to mention but one name. But to-day the Roman revival is even stronger and more in evidence than ever before. Enrico Corradini, the founder of Italian Nationalism, has always been deeply imbued with the Roman idea, in which he sought inspiration for an Italian revival; this sentiment finds its most typical expression in his drama *Giulio Cesare*, written some years ago and produced for the first time on the stage of the Greek theatre of Taormina in the spring of 1928. The Fascists, notably Signor Mussolini, have taken up the same attitude towards the Roman tradition, allusions to which are frequent in the speeches and writings of all the Fascist leaders. On this point there has been a good deal of misunderstanding, especially abroad, where it is often believed that this Roman revival implies that Italy aspires to restore the Roman Empire and bring all its former dominions under Italian rule. In reality the meaning of the revived interest in ancient Rome is quite different. Ancient Rome to the modern Italian does not signify the conquests of Cæsar or Trajan, nor a desire to extend the frontiers of Italy to the Great Wall of Britain or the Porta Orientalis, but rather the spirit of Roman greatness, the strength of the Roman character, the splendid solidity of Roman institutions and buildings, the still mightier force of Roman patriotism and spirit of self-sacrifice, which made men forget private interests for the sake of the fatherland—a spirit expressed by Macaulay in the lines of his *Horatius*:

“When none were for a party,
When all were for the State.”

It is perfectly possible for the modern Italian to aspire to the spiritual greatness of Rome without dreaming of material conquests.

One outward expression of this revived interest in the classical tradition is the energy and efficiency with which the excavation of Roman sites and the restoration of Roman buildings is being carried on. Much had been done in the past by successive popes and by the Government of united Italy in pre-Fascist days. The work of the late Giacomo Gnani, Orsi, Pace, Paribeni, Anti, Lanciani, Giglioli, and innumerable other archæologists of the present generation,

to say nothing of their predecessors in earlier ages or of the great scholars from other lands, had been gradually unveiling the past magnificence of Rome and explaining its significance. But with the advent of Fascism a new and more vigorous impetus has been imparted to these activities throughout Italy and the Italian colonies in North Africa. Above all, in Rome itself the vestiges of the past are being isolated and preserved with religious care. The fora of the Cæsars have been brought to light, the great buildings at the east end of the Forum of Trajan have been rediscovered, the Theatre of Marcellus is being cleared of the slums which suffocated it, excavations are proceeding steadily under the Mausoleum of Augustus, the tombs of the Scipios, and the accesses to the Capitol are being studied and restored. Outside Rome the vast work of excavating the city of Herculaneum, for centuries the dream of archaeologists, is at last being seriously undertaken, while the mysterious waters of Lake Nemi are being made to give up the Imperial galleys, which they had swallowed up. All this contributes to the Roman revival in the Italian spirit, but it need not alarm even the most ardent supporters of the League of Nations Union.

Equally important has been the change in the spirit of education. Without going into the details of the Gentile Reforms, which in spite of certain changes of detail introduced by the eminent philosopher's successors at the Minerva, are still the basis of the Italian scholastic system, one or two of the principles now in force should be mentioned. In the first place the slavish adherence to the tuition imparted in the professors' lectures is discouraged, and the student is encouraged to read, study, and think for himself; Professor Gentile is even unfavourable to the taking of notes. The students are taught to regard the lectures merely as a sort of general guidance for the method of study, rather than as an equivalent of study itself. The elementary schoolmaster in the village is directed to adopt a similar attitude towards his pupils. As a distinguished French writer states: "Gentile has produced not only a new system of philosophy, but determined a current of spiritual life which partakes both of theory and practice—blending them perfectly."¹ Above all, the teaching pro-

¹ Aline Lion, *The Pedigree of Fascism*, pp. 190-191.

ession is invested with a new freedom and dignity, which was never dreamed of before. Under the old *régime* the official programmes drafted at the Ministry of Education laid down the minutest details of tuition and were to be identical throughout Italy. The system had to some extent been adopted from that of France, where a school inspector proudly asserted, on taking out his watch, that he could state which verse of Virgil was being then translated in every *lycée* of France. Under the Gentile system the scholastic programmes determine the end to be attained, but the teacher is free to attain it as best he can; he may organize and distribute his work as he thinks best, according to his own view of education and the aptitude of his pupils.

Another feature is the limitation of the numbers of pupils admitted to each Government school of the higher grade—classical, technical institutes and normal schools—whereas the so-called complementary schools, supplying a more modest and practical education, are open to all. The object of the measure is to limit admission to the schools of the former type, which open the doors of the universities and the professions, only to the abler pupils who show real aptitude. But if the parents are determined to secure access for their children to higher education, they can always do so by means of the private schools; under the new system the pupils of the latter are now placed on the same footing as those of the Government schools, a result which has been secured through the State examinations. Formerly the candidates for the university were examined by the teachers of the *liceo* or *istituto tecnico*, and it was inevitable that the pupils who had attended those schools should be favoured as compared with outsiders coming from private schools. Now all go up before a board of examiners with whom they have had no previous contact. An indirect consequence of this reform has been to encourage the Church schools. There are in Italy few lay private schools, so that to extend these advantages to the pupils of private schools is tantamount to favouring those of the Church schools, which have in consequence considerably increased in numbers and attendance. This fact has caused a certain alarm in anti-Clerical circles, who are apt to see a danger in any increase of ecclesiastical influence, but on the other

hand it should go far to calm the fears of those who see in Fascism an enemy of the Catholic religion. In actual practice, the general result has been simply to make education harder and the examinations more difficult, and consequently to discourage the excessive numbers of young men aspiring to enter the universities.

Still more significant is the increased importance attached to spiritual values in education, as in every other aspect of Italian life to-day. The re-introduction of religious instruction is but one feature of this change. The State is no longer agnostic either in religion or in politics, and if the pupils are taught the main principles of Christianity, they also have patriotic sentiments instilled into them from their earliest years. In the past a certain number of teachers were definitely anti-patriotic and taught rabid sedition and class hatred in the schools and universities, and a still larger number showed indifference to or contempt for patriotic feeling, thereby contributing to intensify that spirit of positivist scepticism which predominated from about 1880 to the World War.

The Fascist Government has created other institutions besides the schools, where the duties of citizenship and patriotism are taught, combined with an excellent physical training. There is the Opera Nazionale Balilla, which comprises the Balilla and the Avanguardisti, while for female pupils the corresponding organizations of the *Giovani Italiane* provide similar tuition. The Opera Nazionale Balilla is on the lines of the Boy Scout movement, which it has now supplanted and which never took root in Italy as it had in some other countries. The new organization is far more important and on a much larger scale than either the lay or the Catholic Boy Scout organizations had ever been. The boys in the Balilla and Avanguardisti groups are taught gymnastics and physical drill of all sorts, are conducted for cross-country walks, and have the principles of good morals and patriotism instilled into them, while the *Giovani Italiane* are taught in a somewhat different way, although on the same general lines. The older boys (the Avanguardisti) are also taught the use of the rifle and given the rudiments of military training, while even some of the girls take lessons in marksmanship. No boy or girl is admitted to these organizations without the written con-

sent of the parents, and that no compulsion is applied is proved by the fact that out of a school population of about four millions as yet only one million are inscribed in the O.N. Balilla (600,000 Balilla and 400,000 Avanguardisti), while the latter figure is large enough to prove the popularity acquired by the organization, and the confidence generally felt in the utility of the training imparted by it. The well-set-up appearance of the boys and girls thus trained goes far to justify this confidence. The Avanguardisti are also the future members of the Fascist party. To-day, as we have seen, none are admitted to it except the Avanguardisti, who on attaining their eighteenth year may be admitted to it. This system is part of the general reliance on youth which is the basis of the whole Fascist conception. The party considers that for its own growth and development it must rely on the rising generation rather than on the past one, and that if the youth of Italy is trained in Fascist ideals of patriotism, duty, and discipline, Fascism and Italy will inevitably become interchangeable terms.

Another organization of an educational character which has assumed great importance in the last few years is the *Opera Nazionale Dopo Lavoro* (National After-Work Organization). Its objects are to provide recreation of all forms, sport and adult education to the working classes (the term being given the widest interpretation) during their leisure hours. The gradual reduction of working hours, which have now been limited to eight in all industries, raised the problem of how that part of the remaining hours which are not devoted to rest and meals can best be utilized. Many of the larger industrial establishments had already created recreation organizations for the purpose, but the smaller ones did not, and a very large number of workers of all grades had no other means of recreation except the wine-shop, unless they could afford the theatres and the cinemas where such existed. The O.N. Dopo Lavoro was created to co-ordinate popular recreation and provide it where it did not exist. The existing organizations, provided they came up to certain standards, were absorbed into the Dopo Lavoro, while retaining their individuality, but the activities of the Dopo Lavoro are rapidly extending to every town, village, factory, or other group of workers all over the country. The railways have

their own branches, and also the Post Office and other departments of the civil service. The *Dopo Lavoro* provides recreations of the most varied nature—courses of lectures on all subjects, reading rooms and libraries, theatrical, and cinema spectacles, concerts, football, mountaineering, boating, and other kinds of sport, excursions to places of interest all over Italy, etc. The members also often enjoy reductions in the prices of admission to ordinary theatres, cinemas, concert halls, picture galleries, and museums, and in certain cases in those of railway tickets. The larger and more important sections have their own club houses, some of them very handsome and commodious ones, with gymnastic halls and theatres; elsewhere more modest premises have to suffice and halls are borrowed for special occasions. There are also itinerant theatrical, musical, and cinema shows and exhibitions, so as to reach the smallest and most isolated groups of workers. The results already achieved are remarkable, the total number of *Dopo Lavoro* groups being (December, 1927) 2,020, with a membership of 453,208. But its possibilities for the future are immense, as there is still a large number of districts and workers not yet reached, especially in the South and in the islands. No more effective system could have been devised for weaning the workers from the *osterie*, gambling and other undesirable forms of entertainment, and for providing healthy amusements to many persons who could not otherwise afford them or were deprived of the material possibility of attending public spectacles save on rare occasions.

A somewhat similar organization is that of the L.U.C.E., which produces and exhibits cinema films of an educational character. Although run as an ordinary business concern, it acts under Government supervision, and public cinemas are usually obliged to include one or more L.U.C.E. films in all public performances. It has come nearer than any other organization to making the best use possible of the cinema and applying it to the purposes for which it is most obviously suited.

While these various activities do not differ essentially from similar ones existing in Italy in the past or in other countries, they are on a wider and more general scale than anything previously attempted, and the fact that they are

under Government supervision and obliged to follow certain principles expressly laid down, eliminates the risk that they should lose their educational character and become mere money-making concerns, or fall into the hands of persons who might use them to carry on seditious or immoral propaganda. As they are now conducted they should certainly prove powerful instruments for the formation of national character and discipline.

One peculiarity of Italian intellectual life which has always existed, and if somewhat attenuated to-day is still real, is the existence of many centres of activity. With the formation of Italian unity the capitals of the former States and certain other cities which had been capitals in still earlier days tended to lose some of their importance, but they continued to retain at least a part of their individuality and to be centres of interest and active life for their respective regions. If Rome had become the political capital of the Kingdom, it was not like London or Paris the one centre of the social and intellectual life of the whole country. Milan, Florence, Turin, Naples, and Palermo were equally brilliant, and their intellectual output was indeed superior to that of the Eternal City. The economic development of many provincial cities was infinitely greater than those of the capital. Age-long traditions, as well as difficulties of communications, helped those cities to retain their old vitality; the development of civilization, the travel habit, and the attraction which a capital and a Court inevitably exercise (in Rome, moreover, there were two Courts and two diplomatic corps) have reduced, but not destroyed it. Milan, Florence, and Naples, above all, are still intellectually and artistically important, and are, indeed, centres of certain movements in those fields. Thus Futurism was essentially Milanese, the movements centring round the *Voce* and *Lacerba* were Florentine, while Benedetto Croce gathered around him in Naples the acolytes of his philosophic teaching. Nor were minor centres lacking; thus Bologna throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century and well on into the twentieth had in Carducci a literary demi-god at whose shrine a large section of the cultured world of Italy worshipped. It is still one of the leading musical cities of Italy.

The fact that Rome is not a great industrial or com-

mercial centre has to some extent affected its intellectual life, as there are fewer wealthy patrons of letters and the arts and the theatre than there are in Milan. In the last two or three decades, however, it has come to acquire greater importance in intellectual life, especially as a centre of art and music, although its exhibitions are of inferior interest to those held every two years in Venice, and the Scala in Milan still reigns supreme over all the operatic theatres of Italy. Few of the leading publishers have their headquarters in Rome, although several have important branch-houses in the capital, the two most important newspapers of Italy—the *Corriere della Sera* and the *Popolo d'Italia*—are printed in Milan and not in Rome, and the newly instituted book fair is held in Florence.

These survivals of provincial life undoubtedly constitute an advantage. They make for variety and prevent intellectual activity from getting into ruts and being absolutely under the sway of momentary fashions. Nor is the intellectual or social snobbery of the dweller in the capital as compared with his provincial brethren common in Italy.

If there is one defect in Fascist Italy which strikes the outside observer more particularly, it is the tendency to rhetoric and exaggerated emphasis in the Press, in public speeches, and even in private conversation. The responsible leaders are, as a rule, less inclined to fall into this error, but the minor lights are greatly addicted to it. We should not forget, however, that rhetoric is a defect of the Italian people in general, due to their natural exuberance, and as in the Italy of to-day the characteristic features of the Italian mentality are intensified we find this tendency also somewhat emphasized. Both Signor Mussolini and Signor Augusto Turati, the General Secretary of the Fascist party, are constantly inveighing against rhetorical exaggerations and exhorting their supporters to work and produce in silence, as indeed very many of them do. But rhetoric and emphasis are faults of youth, and Fascism is essentially youthful. They find their expression not only in language, but also in ceremonies and symbols; these were of value at the time, no doubt, and are the outcome of the origins of the movement, which was to a large extent a return to traditions and memories of the past. But, as Signor Mussolini has often said, the time for such mani-

festations and demonstrations is over; Fascism has already achieved enough for it to be no longer necessary to talk about it.

There is no doubt that the last few years have witnessed a revival of cultural activity of all kinds, and if no stars of dazzling brilliance have as yet appeared on the horizon in any field the general level is higher than it has been for several decades, and popular interest in literary, artistic, and cultural matters is steadily increasing. The numbers and the character of the books published is evidence of this, and while one often hears complaints that the public buys few books, one has but to look into the windows of any bookseller to see what a large number of books are printed, and this suggests that evidently there must be people who buy them. Possibly if the book-selling business were better organized than it is—and to-day it leaves much to be desired—the improvement would be even greater.

EPILOGUE

WE may approve or disapprove of the new developments of Italian life and thought, but we cannot deny that they have profoundly affected the country and its inhabitants in every way, and that the great majority of the Italians are satisfied with the changes which have been brought about. Foreign critics, imbued with the traditional ideas of Liberalism and Democracy, dislike such changes as are not in conformity with their ideas, and there are Italians who take the same attitude, but the latter are a small minority and out of touch with the spirit of the age in Italy herself, where the Liberal-Democratic system did not prove satisfactory.

Many of the material changes, which certainly constitute improvements, had begun before Fascism, even before the war; and, as we have seen, the origins of the new spirit must be sought in the tendencies of the early years of the present century. But Fascism has intensified them and realized them more completely. We have seen how backward Italy had been in every field, how she lagged behind other nations. Her poverty, her lack of raw materials and other natural disadvantages constituted a serious handicap in the competition with other more fortunately situated countries. But the lack of a highly developed national spirit and the defective discipline of the people were even more serious drawbacks. The progress achieved in the last few years could never have been as rapid and as deep as it has been without the driving force of a new spiritual movement like Fascism. Fascism has made the people understand the necessity for a poor country like Italy to maintain its spiritual unity and to make greater efforts than a richer one would have had to make to attain the levels attained elsewhere. That she has succeeded as well as she has with all her handicaps is the best evidence of real efficiency. It is easy enough for an American to be efficient and get rich quick, with all the vast wealth existing in the soil of his country, to say nothing of the tribute now paid to him in

cent years by war-impoverished Europe. But for Italy to have done as much as she has done is the result of greater effort and harder work, and this has been made possible by Fascism.

In the enactment of measures of social reform and of those destined to improve the economic situation the process is gone through with a speed hitherto unknown, and once these measures are enacted they are carried out more thoroughly than was possible before. In the civil services, when orders are given they are executed at once, and they cannot be easily evaded. The same applies to the local administration, where the *podestà* system is more efficient and economical than the old system of mayors, assessors, and municipal councils.

Much of what has been achieved has entailed, and still entails, sacrifices and hardships, and there are, of course, many who are disgruntled and who grumble. But one has only to compare present conditions with those of the past to realize that, imperfect as is the Italian world to-day, it is far better than it was yesterday. Mistakes have been made by the Fascist Government and authorities; the desire to achieve results quickly has at times involved serious errors; but, on the other hand, the errors are perceived and corrected more rapidly and easily and with fewer shocks than before. There are among the Fascist leaders, especially the minor ones, men whose conduct is not all that it should be, and who have taken advantage of their newly acquired authority and power for ends other than those of the public interest. But such men existed before the present *régime*; only then it took longer to get rid of them, and the operation was far more painful and usually involved the explosion of a violent campaign of scandal-mongering and mud-slinging, in which many perfectly honourable men were victimized and reviled in order that the true culprits, or perhaps only a few of them, might be ferreted out and brought to book. An unwholesome taste for scandal and sensation was fostered, and very often the most guilty remained undisturbed or returned to power and influence after a short eclipse. Many of the men who have come to the front with the new *régime* have shown qualities of the highest order, men like Costanzo Ciano, Giovanni Giuriati, Luigi Federzoni, Alberto De Stefani, Enrico Corradini,

Giovanni Gentile, Alfredo Rocco, Emilio Bodrero, to mention but a few of the most notable, and they have achieved admirable work in many fields; there are innumerable other less prominent men who have deserved well of their country. Others turned out bad bargains, but they are being gradually eliminated, and, if some still survive, their turn will come sooner or later. With the vast amount of work to be done, a large number of first-class men are needed, and it is not always easy to find them. It is surprising that as many have been found, and that the real undesirables are as few as they are.

The great majority of the men in authority under the old *régime* have been retained on account of their experience, and have loyally placed it at the service of the new. Indeed, their good qualities have now a better chance of being utilized. Those who have been got rid of on account of their hostility to the new order are very few, and are, indeed, only those who have actively intrigued against it and tried to frustrate its enactments. Even in the recent past the advent of a new Government has always meant the elimination of some men in authority. To-day the change has been more complete than in the past; it is not a mere change of Ministry, but a change of spirit and system. We must bear in mind that the condition of Italy after the advent of Fascism is not unlike that of England after 1689, when no Jacobite or Catholic, however high-minded and capable, had a chance of securing or retaining office or, indeed, any position of responsibility; the same may be said of the United Empire Loyalists in the United States after the Revolution.

Perhaps the chief change brought about by the new *régime* is the enthusiasm which it arouses. Until October, 1922, no Government was regarded as anything more than a temporary stopgap or makeshift, and no political leader inspired whole-hearted devotion, except among a few personal followers and friends or in some particular constituency or district. None since Cavour, and to a minor extent Crispi, had ever represented a real party or body of principles for which large numbers of men were ready to sacrifice their own interests. The almighty Giolitti was regarded as a *furbacchione* or a *volpone*, a past-master in the art of manipulating the elections and dominating Par-

ament; the most which his friends said of him was that he was personally honest and that after his own lights he really was a patriot. Orlando enjoyed considerable popularity in parts of Sicily, among those persons for whom he had secured favours, and he had a number of devoted personal friends. Nitti was made use of by all who had intrigues to push, but was not respected even by those who took advantage of him. Salandra was and is respected as a man of sterling honesty, a true patriot and a fine brain, but he never inspired general enthusiasm except at the moment of Italy's intervention in the war. The same may be said of Sonnino, except that while his intellectual qualities were of the highest order, he had little knowledge of political humanity, or, at least, he had too little hesitation in showing his contempt for it. To the earlier Prime Ministers the same remarks more or less apply. Moreover, each of these statesmen represented little more than himself; none had a real party at his back, none could appeal to the political principles he represented except for vague allusions to Liberalism and Democracy, which had a different meaning in the mouth of each speaker, often even in the different speeches of the same speaker, and in many cases no meaning at all.

Fascism has for the first time generated a conviction in the mass of the people that it represented a definite policy and a definite body of principles calculated to meet the needs of the country and raise it to a higher moral and material level. In Mussolini this sentiment is embodied in the popular mind, and in him the most absolute confidence is felt as in a man who not only represents a principle, but is capable of and determined to carry it out. In Mussolini and in Fascism there is an almost religious belief among all classes, a belief that sometimes inevitably leads to disappointment, because Mussolini is but a man and Fascism but a human institution. But even disappointment in particular cases does not impair the confidence in the general merits of the man and the system. Thus the difficulties and hardships entailed by the revaluation of the currency were fully realized and laid a heavy burden on everyone; yet they were regarded as the inevitable consequences of a policy which was good in itself and bound to bring about great benefits in the long run. Here the

popular instinct was right, and the course of events is already justifying this confidence. Yet under any other system of Government such a policy would have encountered serious resistance and, perhaps, have failed in its object, with disastrous results to the country. But it should never be forgotten that the authority and prestige of Mussolini are not by any means a personal matter; his rule is, indeed, less personal than that of any of his predecessors, for it is based on a real and admirably disciplined organization, with a complete hierarchy commanding respect and obedience and embodying an idea and a moral code. Mussolini is merely the supreme expression and personification of the system.

Fascism has, moreover, created a civic spirit which did not exist before, at all events never in so intense a measure. Two instances will illustrate this. When the debt settlement with the United States was concluded the first instalment was raised by a national subscription of one dollar per head; the idea did not emanate from the Government or any authority or public man, but from a small group of dock labourers at Genoa, and as soon as it was mooted it caught on like wild-fire and was carried out rapidly and with the greatest enthusiasm. The other instance occurred towards the latter part of 1928, when it was felt that the people must come to the aid of the Government in improving the financial situation and reducing the national debt—*restauratio æarii* it was called. A mass of Government bonds were sent to the Prime Minister from all parts of the country and from persons of all classes, to be destroyed. There were anonymous gifts of 50,000 lire and working men's contributions of 100 lire. The total amounted to several hundred million lire, which were publicly burnt. Here, again, the idea arose spontaneously from among the people and was carried out with enthusiasm. Such instances would have been impossible in the past except in moments of great national crises, as in the Risorgimento or during the World War, whereas now they are regarded as part of the normal duties of citizenship. Fascists, indeed, agree with the French poet Rostand when he wrote :

" Le seul vice c'est l'inertie
La seule vertu c'est l'enthousiasme."

We often hear foreign critics remark that if the Fascist *gime* has effected many real benefits, these have had to be purchased at a price. This, of course, is true. But what benefits have ever been secured except at a price? The price, however, is not what these observers think. The loss of Parliamentaryism, of the freedom of the Press, of the right to plot against the security of the State, and to promote class hatred and civil war, is not felt as a loss at all by the enormous majority of the people. The real price is the necessity for a more stringent national discipline, greater self-control, a stricter devotion to duty, than were exacted under the easy-going semi-anarchical *régime* of the past. But these are losses which, even in themselves, make for greater gain. Perhaps the one real loss is the diminished tolerance of contrary opinions, not through the action of the Government or of any authority, but through the generally prevailing spirit among the people. This, too, is the result of the enthusiasm for the new system. The tolerance of the past was due, at least in great part, to scepticism and in the conviction that nothing really mattered. To-day there is no such scepticism, and consequently less tolerance of unorthodox views or of the defeatist spirit. This attitude existed, to a smaller extent, even in the Risorgimento and immediate post-Risorgimento period, when, as that inimitable actor and playwright Ferravilla said when he wished to show one of his characters in an unfavourable light: "Ha detto male di Garibaldi!" ("He has spoken ill of Garibaldi!")

All these strivings will not always lead to immediate success, and occasional set-backs are inevitable with all the best will in the world. But as a distinguished Italian economist declared with regard to Italy's economic battle, applying to it the words of one of the great Allied generals during the World War: "Victory is difficult, but defeat is impossible." This optimism is in itself an asset, just as the gloomy pessimism and sceptical defeatism of the past was a handicap, for it is not the easy optimism of the fatalist, the foolish confidence of him who buries his head in the sand, but the strenuous consciousness of progress, the conviction of the necessity for further effort, and the determination to overcome the obstacles which still lie in the path.

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MAY 22	MAY 31 '61	
MAY 24	JUL 5 '63	
NOV 4	APR 5 1967	
MAY 31	DEC 18 1968	
JUN 20 '69		
Oc 3 '51		
APR 9 1954		
MAY 22 1954		
JUN 7 1954		
MAY 22 1955		
MAY 10 1955		
APR 25 1958		
JAN 5 1957		
JAN 5 1957		
JAN 23 1957		

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ST. OLAF COLLEGE

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Villari, Luigi - Italy, by Luigi Villari.



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